Peg O' My Heart

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

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By J. HARTLEY MANNERS

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SCENE AND PROPERTY PLOT

1—Balcony clear across stage in three. 2—Fancy cut wood banister right down to the foot of the stairs. 3—Peggy's room off Balcony. 4—Mrs. Chichester's room off Balcony. 5—Stained glass windows painted on back flats. 6—Door U.C. under balcony leading into lawn, outside glass doors. 7—Pillars painted in fine statuary holding up balcony. 8—Steps leading from balcony to stage. 9—First landing. 10—Ethel's room off first landing. 11—Exit leading off R. 12—Fancy old mission settee. 13—Fancy mission chair. 14—Exit into Alaric's room-D.L. 15—Alcove. 16—Baby grand piano set in alcove, stool, electric lamp, etc. 17—Small statue of Cupid standing on piano. 18—Fancy mission tete in front of piano. 19—Bookcase filled with books. 20—Writing desk and all material. 21—Chair in front of desk. 22—Large post at foot of stairs and fancy glass electric globes, D stage globe to be lit.

Props—1 telescope bag and bundle for Pegge, 1 French poodle dog, 1 homely Airedale for Peggy, card tray and cards, medallion rugs around ad lib, purse, jewel box and jewels, wills, documents, etc. Electric flash light for Alaric, electric switch button on post near desk.

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

Sir Gerald Adair (known as Jerry—Lead).
Christopher Brent (Heavy).
Alaric Chichester (Light Comedy).
Hawkes (Attorney-at-Law—Character).
Jarvis (Butler—Bit).
Margaret O'Connell (Known as Peggy—Lead).
Miss Ethel Chichester (General Business).
Mrs. Chichester, the Mater (Character).
Bennett, Maid (Bit).

SYNOPSIS:

Act 1. Drawing Room Chichester Mansion England., Arrival of Peggy.
Act 2. Same. Month later. (Planned elopement).
Act 3. Same. Next morning. (I am going to meet father). There's Nothing so Sweet in Life as Love's Young Dream.

ACT 1

Mrs. Chichester—(Discovered at rise with letter in hand. Very down-hearted).
Alaric—(Enters at rise from U.C.). Well Mater, what's the matter, what's up?
Ethel—(Enters from R.1).
Mrs. C.—O Ethel, O Alaric.
Alaric—(Crossing to her). What is it Mater?
Ethel—Mother! (Seats herself).
Mrs. C.—We are ruined!
Alaric—Nonsense!
Ethel—Really!o
Mrs. C.—Our bank has failed. Every penny your father left me was in it. We have nothing,—nothing,—we are beggars.
Alaric—(Takes letter and paper from mother—reads) Failure of Giffiths' [illegible] (Reads letter) Giffiths' Bank suspended business yesterday (looks up) Giffiths' Bank closed its doors, eh?
Ethel—(Crosses to piano, looking over music). Pity!
Mrs. C.—We are ruined!
Alaric—Now I call that a down-right rotten blackguardly shame,—a blackguardly shame. Closes its doors indeed. Why should it close its doors? That's what I want to know. Why should it. (to Ethel and then to mother) What right has banks to fail. There should be a law against it. They should be made to open their doors and to keep them open. That's what we give them our money for. So that we can take it out again when we want it.
Mrs. C.—Everything gone! Ruined! And at my age.
Alaric—A nice kettle of fish! I say Ethel, a nice kettle of fish all a-boiling, eh?
Ethel—A shame. (Playing softly on piano with no feeling—unconcerned).
Alaric—For Goodness sake, stop that Ethel. Haven't you got any feeling. Can't you see how up-set the mater is,—and I. Stop it. There's a dear. Let's put our backs into this and thresh it out. Have a little family meeting as it were.

Mrs. C.—Ruined! At my age!

Alaric—(Sits on arm of chair, puts arm around mother). Don't worry mater, I will go down and tell them what I think of them. They cannot play the fool with me. I should think not, indeed. Listen mater. You have a son, thank God, and one no bank can take liberties with. What we put in there, we have got to have out. We have simply got to have it out. There! I have said it.

Mrs. C.—(As he crosses away). It is bankruptcy.

Ethel—Failed.

Mrs. C.—We are beggars. I must live on charity for the rest of my life. The guest of relatives I have hated the sight of and who have hated me. It is terrible.

Alaric—Don't you think we will get anything? (To Ethel).

Ethel—Nothing.

Alaric—(Sits beside mother) I always thought Bank Directors were blighters. Good Lord! What a mess! What will become of Ethel, mother?

Mrs. C.—Whoever shelters me must shelter Ethel as well. It is hard at my age to be sheltered.

Alaric—(Crosses and takes Ethel's hand). Shocking tough, old girl.

Ethel—No.

Alaric—No what?

Ethel—Charity.

Alaric—Cold blooded word. What will you do?

Ethel—Work.

Alaric—At what?

Ethel—Teach.

Alaric—Teach! Who in the wide world can you teach?

Ethel—Children.

Alaric—Oh good! That is rich. Eh, mother, fancy Ethel teaching grubby little brats their A B C's. Tush!

Ethel—Must. (Still at piano, still unmoved).

Alaric—A Chichester! Teaching!

Ethel—Settled. (Running her fingers slowly down the piano).

Alaric—Very well, I will work too. I will put my hand to the plow. The more I think of it, the keener I am to begin. From to-day I will be a working man.

Ethel—Ha! Ha! (Laughs).

Alaric—May I ask you why that ha, ha. Why I ask you? There is nothing I could not do if I were really put to it. Not a single thing. Is there mother?

Mrs. C.—I know that, dear, but it is dreadful to think of you working.

Alaric—Not at all. I am just tingling all over at the thought of it. The only reason I have not so far, is because I have never had to and now that I have, I will just buckle on my armour, so to speak, and astonish you all.

Ethel—Laughs.

Alaric—Please do not laugh that cheerless way, Ethel. It goes all down my spine. Jerry is always telling me I ought to do something. That all the world is for a worker. He is right and I am going to show him. (Picks up paper and looks at it). What is to-day? The 1st! Of course it is,—June 1st. Jerry is coming to-day. All his family too. They have taken Noel's Folly on the hill. He's sure to look in here. Could not be better. He's the cove to turn to in a case of this kind.

(Enter Jarvis with card tray and card. Goes over to Alaric).

(Alaric picks up card—reads), Christian Brent. (Throws card back on tray).

(Ethel shows interest).

Mrs. C.—I cannot see anyone. I am all unstrung.

Alaric—Nor I. Tell Mr. Brent we are sorry but—

Ethel—I will see him. Bring Mr. Brent in Jarvis.

Mrs. C.—My head is throbbing. I will go to my room.

Alaric—Do not worry, mother. Leave everything to me. I'll thresh the whole thing out,—absolutely thresh it out.

Mrs. C.—(Exit at head of first landing.)

Alaric—(To Ethel). Awful business, eh, Ethel?

Ethel—Pretty bad.

Alaric—Really going to teach?

Ethel—Yes.

Alaric—Right. I'll find something too. Very likely Doctor. We will pull through some way,—

Ethel—(Stops conversation). Mr. Brent is coming.

Alaric—Jolly good of you to let him bore you. I hate the sight of the beggar myself. Always looks to me like the first conspirator to a play.

Jarvis—(Enters). Mr. Brent. (Alaric exit into garden U.C.)

(Exit Jarvis).

Brent—(After Jarvis' exit). How are you?

Ethel—Fair.

Brent—Where is your mother?

Ethel—Lying down.

Brent—And Alaric?

Ethel—In the garden.

Brent—Could we have a moment or two alone?

Ethel—Very likely.

Brent—(Crosses to Ethel). Glad to see me?

Ethel—Why not?

Brent—I am glad to see you,—more than glad.

Ethel—Really!

Brent—(Sits beside her). Ethel, I am at the cross-roads.

Ethel—Ah!

Brent—It came last night.

Ethel—Did it?

Brent—This is the end between Sybol and myself.

Ethel—Is it?

Brent—Absolutely the end. It has been horrible from the first—horrible. There is not a word of mine, nor an action that she does not misunderstand.

Ethel—How boring.

Brent—She would see harm, even in this.

Ethel—Why?

Brent—She would think I was here to,—to,—

Ethel—What?

Brent—To make love to you.

Ethel—Well, aren't you?

Brent—Ethel!

Ethel—Didn't you always.

Brent—Has it seemed like that to you?

Ethel—By insinuation. Never straight-forwardly.

Brent—Has it offended you?

Ethel—Then you admit it?

Brent—Oh! I wish I had the right to,—to,—

Ethel—Yes?

Brent—Make love to you straight-forwardly.

Ethel—If you had the right to make love to me straight-forwardly you would not do it.

Brent—What do you mean?

Ethel—It is only because you have not the right that you do it,—by suggestion.

Brent—How can you say that?

Ethel—You do not deny it?

Brent—What a horrible opinion you must have of me!

Ethel—Then we are quits, aren't we?

Brent—How?

Ethel—Haven't you one of me?

Brent—Of you? Why, Ethel!

Ethel—Surely every married man must have a contemptible opinion of one he covertly makes love to. If he didn't, he couldn't do it, could he?

Brent—I do not follow you.

Ethel—Haven't you had time to think of an answer?

Brent—I do not know what you are driving at.

Ethel—No? I think you do. What happened last night.

Brent—I had rather not say. I would sound like a cad blaming a woman.

Ethel—Never mind how it sounds. Tell me. It must have been amusing.

Brent—Amusing! Good God! The more I look at you and listen to you the more I realize I should never have married.

Ethel—Why did you?

Brent—Have you ever seen a young hare, fresh from its kind, run headlong into a snare. Have you ever seen a young man, free from the trammels of college, dash into a net? I did. I was not trap-wise. Good God! What nurslings we are when we first feel our feet. We are just like children loose from the leading strings. Anything that glitters catches us. Every trap that is set for our unwary feet, we step into. I did. Dropped in. Caught hand and foot,—mind and soul.

Ethel—Soul?

Brent—Yes.

Ethel—Didn't you mean body?

Brent—Body, mind and soul.

Ethel—Well body anyway.

Brent—And for what,—for what,—Life companionship. That is what we build on in marriage. And what did I realize. Hate and wrangling—wrangling. Just as the common herd, with no changes. Wrangle and make it a part of their lives,—a zest to their union. It has been my curse.

Ethel—What? Wrangling?

Brent—She did not understand.

Ethel—You?

Brent—My thoughts. My actions.

Ethel—How curious.

Brent—You mean you would.

Ethel—Probably.

Brent—I am sure of it. (Tries to take her hand. She pulls it away).

Ethel—Tell me more about your wife.

Brent—The slightest attention shown to any other woman means a ridiculous humiliating scene.

Ethel—Humiliating?

Brent—Is not doubt and suspicion humiliating?

Ethel—It would be a compliment in some cases.

Brent—How?

Ethel—It would be a fictitious value on some man.

Brent—You would not humiliate me in that way?

Ethel—No, I do not think I could. If a man showed a preference for another woman, she would be quite welcome to him.

Brent—No man could.

Ethel—Let me see,—Were you?—Just married, were you not. Go on.

Brent—Then came the baby.

Ethel—Ah!

Brent—One would think that would change things. But no. Neither of us wanted her. Neither of us loved her. She should come of love and not hate and she is a child of hate. She sits in her little chair. Her small wrinkled and disillusioned face turned to us with eyes watching us accusingly. She submits to carresses as though they were distasteful to her. As if she knew they were lies. At times, she pushes any nearing faces away with her little baby fingers. I shouldn't tell you this. It is terrible. I see it in your face. What are you thinking?

Ethel—I am sorry.

Brent—For me?

Ethel—For your wife.

Brent—My wife?

Ethel—Yes. Aren't you? No? Are you just sorry for yourself?

Brent—You think me purely selfish?

Ethel—Naturally I do. Why not be truthful to ourselves some times, eh?

Brent—We quarrelled last night,—about you (Ethel looks up at him.)

Brent—Gossip has linked our names together. My wife has heard it and put the worst possible construction on it.

Ethel—Well?

Brent—We said things to each other last night that can never be forgiven or forgotten. I left the house and walked the streets,—hours. I looked my whole life back and through as though it were some strangers' (X's to window and back). I believe we should be taught,—we should be taught when we are young, what marriage really means,—just as we are taught not to steal, to lie or to sin, and in marriage we do all three when we are ill-mated,—we steal affection from some one else,—we lie in our lives and we sin in our relationship.

Ethel—Do you mean that you are a thief, a sinner and a liar,—Oh! take some of the blame. Do not put it all on the woman.

Brent—You have never spoken like this to me before.

Ethel—I have often wanted to,—what do you intend doing?

Brent—Separate,—You do not doctor a poisoned limb when your life depends on it. You cut it off. When two lives generate a deadly poison, face the problem as a surgeon would,—amputate.

Ethel—And after the amputation,—what then?

Brent—That is why I am here facing you. Do you understand what I mean?

Ethel—Oh! dear, yes. Perfectly. I have been waiting for you to get to that point.

Brent—Ethel. (Tries to embrace her and she draws away).

Ethel—Wait. Suppose we generate poison,—What would you do? Amputate me?

Brent—Do not say these things Ethel. (Hurt).

Ethel—I am afraid, Christian, I am too frank, am I not?

Brent—You stand alone Ethel. You seem to look into the hearts of people and know why and how they beat.

Ethel—I do sometimes. It is an awkward faculty.

Brent—How marvelously different two women can be. You,—and my wife.

Ethel—We are not really different, Christian. Only sometimes men like change. You do. And the new have all the virtues. Why I might not last as long as your wife did!

Brent—Do not say that! We have a common bond,—understanding.

Ethel—Think so?

Brent—I understand you.

Ethel—I wonder!

Brent—You do me.

Ethel—Yes! That is just the difficulty.

Brent—(Agitated) I tell you I am at the cross roads. The finger board points the way to me distinctly.

Ethel—Does it?

Brent—It does. Would you risk it? (Leans across to her).

Ethel—What?

Brent—I will hide nothing. I will put it up to you honestly. The snubs of your friends. The whisper of scandal that will grow into a roar. Afraid to open a newspaper fearing what might be printed there. Life at first in some little continental village, dreading the passers through, keeping out of sight, lest you be seen and recognized. (Deprecatingly) No, no, it would not be fair to you.

Ethel—No, Chris. I don't think it would be.

Brent—You see I *am* a cad,—just a selfish cad.

Ethel—Aren't you?

Brent—I will never speak of this again. I would not have now,—only,—I am distracted to-day,—completely distracted. Will you forgive me for speaking as I did.

Ethel—Certainly. I am not offended. On the contrary. Any way I will think it over and let you know.

Brent—You will really!—You will really think it over!

Ethel—I will really.

Brent—And when she sets me free, we could,—we could,—

Ethel—It is a difficult little word at times, isn't it?

Brent—Would you marry me?

Ethel—I never cross my bridges until I come to them and we are such a long way from that, aren't we?

Brent—Then I am to wait.

Ethel—Yes, do. When the time comes to accept the charity of relatives or do something useful for two pence a week, Bohemia, France or Italy,—but then runaways always go to France or Italy, don't they? Suppose we choose Hungary, shall we?—Very well. When I have to choose between charity, labor and Bohemia, Hungary may beckon me.

Brent—What new mood is this? Charity!—Labor!

Ethel—Yes. It has come to that. A tiresome bank has failed with all our six-pence locked up in it. Isn't it stupid?

Brent—Is all your money gone?

Ethel—I think so.

Brent—Good God!

Ethel—Dear mother knows as little about business as she does about me. Until this morning, she has always had a rooted belief in her bank and her daughter. If I bolt with you, her last cherished illusion will have been destroyed.

Brent—Can't I,—Won't you let me help you?

Ethel—How? Lend us money do you mean?

Brent—Yes. Why not? I would do that if she would let me.

(She indignant). I beg your pardon.

Ethel—So you see we are both in a way at the cross roads.

Brent—(Seizes her hand). Let me take you away out of it all.

(*Peggy* enters with dog and telescope bag. Looks around,—sees them. They pay no attention to her. She sits down in chair with her back to them.

Ethel—No, not just now. I am not in a bolting mood to-night.,:Chris. Sometime perhaps in the dead of night,—something will snap in me. The slack, selfish, luxury loving me, that hates to be roused into action, and a craving for adventure will come. Then, I will send for you. (Takes her hand and this time she does not draw it away).

Brent—And you *will* come with me?

Ethel—I suppose so. Then Heaven help m.

Brent—Why should we wait?

Ethel—It will give us the suspense of expec n.

Brent—I want you,—I need you.

Ethel—Until the time comes for amputation.

Brent—Don't, don't. (Drops her hand)

Ethel——Well I do not want you to have any illusions about me, Chris. I have none about you. Let us begin fair anyway. It will be so much easier when the end comes.

Brent—There will be no end. I love you,—I love you with every breath in my body,—every thought in my mind,—every throb of my nerves,—I love you. (Embraces her).

Ethel—(Gently forcing herself loose). Please don't! It is so hot this morning. (Turns around, sees Peggy sitting there, then X's to her). How long have you been here?

Peggy—Surely, I only came in this minute.

Ethel—What did you want?

Peggy—Nothing.

Ethel—(Angrily). Nothing?

Peggy—I was just told to wait.

Ethel—Who told you?

Peggy—A gentleman.

Ethel—What gentleman?

Peggy—Just a gentleman. (Gives her card). He told me to wait there.

Ethel—(Reads). Mrs. Chichester, Regal Villa. What do you want with Mrs. Chichester?

Peggy—I don't want anything with her. I was just told t'wait.

Ethel—Who are you?

Peggy—I wasn't to say a wurrud I'm tellin' ye. I was just to wait.

Ethel—(Looks at Brent, then to Peggy). You say you have only been here a minute?

Peggy—That's all,—just a minute.

Ethel—Were we talking when you came in?

Peggy—You were.

Ethel—Did you hear what we said?

Peggy—Some of it,—not much.

Ethel—What did you hear?

Peggy—(Imitating). Please don't. It's so hot this morning.

Ethel—You refuse to say why you are here or who you are.

Peggy—It isn't me that's refusin'. All the gintleman said to was—"Ye go to that place that's written down on the card and ye set down there and wait and that's all ye do.

Brent—How extraordinary.

Ethel—The servants' quarters are at the back of the house.

Peggy—Are they?

Ethel—And I may save you the trouble of waiting by telling you that we are quite provided with servants. We don't need any further assistance. (Peggy appears hurt). If you insist on waiting, kindly do so there. (Peggy takes dog and all belongings and exits U.C.). Follow the path to the right until you come to the door. Knock and ask permission to wait there And for your future guidance, go to the back door of a house and ring. Do not walk unannounced into a private room.

Peggy—Yes, ma'am. I didn't know. All the gintleman sed wuz, "Go there and wait."

Ethel—That will do.

Peggy—I'm sorry I disturbed ye. (Glances at Brent).

Ethel—That will do. (Peggy exit off B.) Outrageous.

Brent—Poor little wretch. (Looks after her). She's quite pretty.

Ethel—(Sarcastically). Is she?

Brent—In a shabby sort of way. Don't you think so?

Ethel—I never notice the lower order. You apparently do.

Brent—Yes, often. They are very interesting. (Strains to get another glimpse of Peggy). Isn't she the strangest little apparition?

Ethel—She is only a few yards off. Do you care to follow her?

Brent—(X's to Ethel). Why, Ethel!

Ethel—Suppose my mother walked in here,—or Alaric,—instead of that creature. Never do such a thing again.

Brent—I was carried away.

Ethel—Kindly exercise a little more restraint. You had better go now. (X's him to staircase). (He follows her).

Brent—May I call to-morrow?

Ethel—No. Not to-morrow.

Brent—The following day?

Ethel—Perhaps.

Brent—Remember, I build on you.

Ethel—I suppose we are worthy of each other. (Alaric whistles off stage). Go.

Alaric—(Enters through window). Hello, Brent! Disturbing you,—or you Ethel?

Ethel—(Cooly). You have not disturbed me

Brent—I'm just going.

Alaric—Well wait a minute. (X's to window, beckons to Hawks to enter). Come in. (He does so). Come here, Ethel. I want you to meet Mr. Hawkes,—Mr. Hawkes, my sister. Mr. Hawkes, Mr. Brent. (All recognize introduction). Now Ethel, see if the Mater's well enough to come down, like a dear, will you. This gentleman has come from London to see her. And come back yourself too, like an angel. He says he has some business that concerns the whole family. (Ethel exits up steps off R. Alaric seats Hawkes in a chair. X's to Brent, takes his hand and shakes it violently. Must you go?

Brent—Yes.

Alaric—(Rushes to door, opens it for him). Sorry I was out when you called. Run in any time. Always delighted to see you,—delighted! Is the angel wife all well?

Brent—(Bows). Thank you.

Alaric—And the darling child?

Brent—(X's up to door and turns). Please give my remembrance to your mother. (Exit off L).

Alaric—(Calling after him). Certainly. She'll be disappointed not to have seen you. Run in any time,—any time at all.

(Enter Mrs. Chichester and Ethel. Alaric introduces mother. Mater dear, I found this gentleman in a rose bed enquiring the way to our Lodge. He comes all the way from dear old London just to see you. Mr. Hawkes,—my mother.

Mrs. C.—You have come to see me?

Hawkes—On a very important and a very private family matter.

Mrs. C.—Why private?

Alaric—We are the family, Mr. Hawkes.

Mrs. C.—Is it bad news?

Hawkes—Oh! Dear, no.

Alaric—Then it is good news!

Hawkes—In a measure.

Alaric—Then for Heaven's sake, get at it. You've got me clammy. We could do with a little good news. Wait a minute! Is it by any chance about the bank.

Hawkes—(To Mrs. C.) No. It is about your late brother, Nathaniel Kingsnorth.

Mrs. C.—Is Nathaniel dead?

Hawkes—Yes, madam. He died ten days ago.

Alaric—Dear old Nat, eh Ethel?

Mrs. C.—(With handkerchief to eyes). Dear old Nat.

Ethel—Never saw him.

Mrs. C.—You say he died ten days ago (Hawkes bows). Why was I not informed?—The funeral,—

Hawkes—There was no funeral.

Alaric—No funeral?

Hawkes—No. In obedience to his urgent request, he was cremated and no one was present except the chief executor and myself. If I may use Mr. Kingsnorth's words without giving pain, he said he so little regretted not having seen any of his relatives for the last twenty years

of his life-time, he was sure they would regret equally little his death. On no account was any one to wear mourning for him, nor were they to express any open sorrow. They would not feel it, so why lie about it. I use his own words.

Alaric—What a rum old bird!

Mrs. C.—(Weeping). He was always the most un-feeling,—the most heartless,—the most,—

Hawkes—Now in his will. (Takes out document from pocket), in his will,—

Mrs. C.—(Stops crying). Eh! A will!

Alaric—What! Did the poor old gentleman leave a will! (A French poodle runs on stage, Ethel picks it up and pets it).

Hawkes—As Mr. Kingsnorth's legal adviser up to the time of his ultimate death, I have come here to make you acquainted with some of its contents.

Alaric—Dear old Nat. Do you remember mother, we met him at Victoria station once when I was little more than a baby. I can see him as plainly now as if it was yesterday. A portly sandy-haired old buck with three jolly chins.

Hawkes—He was white near the end and very, very thin.

Alaric—Was he! Fancy that! It just shows mother doesn't it? How much did he leave?

Hawkes—His estate is valued approximately at some two hundred thousand pounds. (Alaric whistles).

Mrs. C.—Perhaps it was my fault I did not see him oftener.

Alaric—How did the old boy split it up?

Hawkes—To his relatives, he left,—(Looks over document).

Alaric—Well! Well! How much? Don't stop right in the middle of an important thing like that. You make me nervous as a chicken.

Hawkes—To his immediate relatives Mr. Kingsnorth left,—I regret to say it,—nothing.

Mrs. C.—Nothing!

Alaric—Not a penny?—To any one?

Hawkes—I deeply regret to say,—nothing.

Mrs. C.—Our own flesh and blood!

Alaric—What a shabby beggar.

Mrs. C.—He was always the most selfish,—the most,—

Hawkes—(Turning document). Ah! Here we have it. This, Mrs. Chichester, is how Mr. Kingsnorth expresses his attitude toward his relatives in his last will and testament. (Reading): "I am the only member of the Kingsnorth family who ever made any money. All my precious relatives either inherit it or married to get it,—

Mrs. C.—I assure you,—

Alaric—Half a minute, mother! Let us hear it out to the bitter end. He must have been an amusing old gentleman.

Hawkes—(Reads): consequently I am not going to leave one penny to relatives who are already well provided for.

Mrs. C.—But we are not provided for!

Alaric—No! Our bank is busted.

Mrs. C.—We are ruined. (Sobbing).

Alaric—Not a three-pence.

Hawkes—How extremely painful.

Alaric—Painful! That's not the word,—disgusting I call it.

Hawkes—Under those circumstances, perhaps a clause in the will may have a certain interest and an element of relief,—When Mr. Kingsnorth realized that he did not have much longer to live, he spoke constantly of his other sister—Angelia.

Mrs. C.—Angelia,—She is dead.

Hawkes—That is why he spoke of her.

Mrs. C.—And not a word of me!

Hawkes—We will come to that later. It appears this sister Angelia married at the age of .. a certain Irishman by the name of O'Connell and was cut off by her family. Went to the United States of America with her husband where a daughter was born. After going through many conditions of misery with her husband, who never seemed to prosper she died shortly after giving birth to the child. Mr. Kingsnorth elsewhere expresses his lasting regret that in one of her acute stages of distress, she wrote to him asking him for the first time to assist her. He replied: "You have made your bed. Lie on it."

Mrs. C.—She had disgraced the family. He was justified.

Hawkes—With death approaching, Mr. Kingsnorth's conscience began to trouble him and his treatment of his unfortunate sister distressed him. If the child were alive, he wanted

to see her. I made inquiries and found that the girl was living with her father in very poor circumstances in the City of New York. We sent sufficient funds for the journey together with a request to her father to allow her to visit Mr. Kingsnorth in England. The father consented. However, before the young girl sailed, Mr. Kingsnorth died.

Alaric—He did, eh! That was too bad. And before seeing her. Did you let her sail, Mr. Hawkes?

Hawkes—Yes. We thought it best to bring her over here and acquaint her with the sad news after her arrival. Had she known before sailing, she might not have taken the journey.

Alaric—But what was the use of bringing her over when Mr. Kingsnorth was dead?

Hawkes—For this reason: Realizing that he might never see her, Mr. Kingsnorth made a most remarkable provision for her in his will.

Mrs. C.—Provided for her and not for,—

Hawkes—Here is the provision: "I hereby direct that the sum of one thousand pounds a year be paid to any respectable well-connected woman of breeding and family who will undertake the education and up-bringing of my neice, Margarette O'Connell, in accordance with the dignity and tradition of the Kingsnorths."

Mrs. C.—He remembers a neice he never saw and his own sister—

Alaric—It beats cock fighting. That's all I can say—It beats cock fighting.

Hawkes—"If, at the expiration of one year, my neice proves to be in the judgment of my executors, unworthy of further interest, she is to be returned to her father and the sum of 250 pounds a year paid her to provide her with the necessities of life. On the other hand, if she proves herself worthy of the traditions of the Kingsnorth family, the course of training is to be continued until she reaches the age of 21 when I hereby bequeath her the sum of 5000 pounds a year to be paid annually out of my estate during her lifetime and to be continued after her death to any male issue she may have,—by marriage."

Mrs. C.—And me,—his own sister—

Alaric—Beats anything I ever heard of,—positively anything.

Hawkes—On no account is her father to be permitted to visit her and should the course of training be continued after the first year, she must not on any account see her father until she reaches the age of 21 when she can do as she pleases.

Alaric—I do not see how that clause interests us in the least, Mr. Hawkes.

Hawkes—Now, my dear Mrs. Chichester, it was Mr. Kingsnorth's wish that the first lady to be approached on the matter of undertaking the training of the young lady, should be—you.

Mrs. C.—(Astonished). I?

Hawkes—Mr. Kingsnorth said he should be sure at least of his neice having a systematic up-bringing in the best traditions of the Kingsnorths and that although his sister Monica was somewhat narrow and conventional in ideas, (I use his own words) he felt sure she was eminently fitted to undertake the charge. There! You have the whole object of my visit. Will you undertake the training of the young lady?

Mrs. C.—I never heard of such a thing!

Ethel—Ridiculous.

Alaric—Tush and nonsense!

Hawkes—I take it you refuse.

Mrs. C.—Absolutely.

Ethel—Entirely.

Alaric—I should say so.

Hawkes—Then there is nothing re to be said. I was only carrying out the dead man's wishes by coming here and making ts known to you. Mr. Kingsnorth was of the opinion that you were well provided for an outside of the sentimental reason that the girl was your own neice, the additional 1000 ds might be welcome as pin money for your daughter.

Ethel—Ha, Ha! Pin money!

Alaric—(Takes mother D.L.) Listen, mater,—Ethel, come here. (Aside, to them). It's a cool thousand, you know; thousands don't grow on raspberry bushes when your bank's gone up. What do you say, eh?

Mrs. C.—It would keep things going,—

Alaric—The wolf from the door.

Ethel—And no charity.

Mrs. C.—Well, what do you think?

Alaric—Whatever you say mater.

Ethel—You decide mother.

Mrs. C.—We can try it for a while at least,—

Alaric—Until we can look around.

Mrs. C.—Something may be saved from the wreck.

Alaric—Until I get started.

Mrs. C.—Well, Ethel?

Ethel—Whatever you decide, mamma.

Mrs. C.—I'll do it.—It will be hard,—but I'll do it. (X's to Hawkes).

Hawkes—Well?

Mrs. C.—For the sake of the memory of my sister, I will do as Nathaniel wishes.

Hawkes—Good! I am glad. I am delighted. Now that you have decided so happily, there is one thing more I must tell you. The young lady is not to be told the conditions of the will unless at the discretion of the executors should some crisis arise. She will be to all intents and purposes—your guest. In that way we may be able to arrive at a more exact knowledge of her character. Is that understood? And now where is your bell? (Alaric indicates). May I ring?

Alaric—Certainly.

Hawkes—(Rings). Now, I would like to send for the young lady,—the heiress.

Mrs. C.—Where is she?

Hawkes—She arrived this morning from New York and I brought her straight here. I had a call on a client so I gave her your address and directed her to come here and wait. (Ethel at word "wait" looks at lawyer). (Enter Jarvis). Is there a young lady waiting for Mr. Hawkes?

Jarvis—A young lady, sir? (Starts for R. Suddenly stops and turns back). There's a young person sitting in the kitchen. Came up and knocked at the door and said she had to wait until a gentleman called. Can't get nothing out of her.

Hawkes—That must be Miss O'Connell.

Mrs. C.—My niece in the kitchen! (To Jarvis). Surely you should know the difference between my niece and a servant.

Jarvis—I am truly sorry madam,—but there wasn't nothing to tell.

Mrs. C.—Another such mistake and you will leave my employment.

Jarvis—'Pon my word, no one could tell.

Mrs. C.—That will do,—Bring my niece here at once! (Jarvis exits after Peggy) It is monstrous.

Hawkes—I am afraid it was all my fault. I told her not to talk, to just say that she was to wait. I wanted to have an opportunity to explain matters before introducing her.

Mrs. C.—She should have been brought straight to me. The poor thing. (Angry). My niece in the kitchen! A Kingsnorth mistaken for a servant!

(Enter Jarvis ushering Peggy in with dog and bag same as before).

Alaric—Oh! I say! Really you know,— It isn't true. It can't be.

Hawkes—(Takes Peggy gently by the arm). Come here, my dear, come here. Do not be frightened. We are all your friends.

Mrs. C.—(Very dignified). What is your name?

Peggy—Peg, ma'am.

Mrs. C.—What?

Peggy—(Bobs courtesy). Sure! Me name's Peg, ma'am.

Mrs. C.—Alaric, call Jarvis.

Alaric—(As he crosses. Aside to Ethel). It can't really be true, eh?

Ethel—Shocking!

Hawkes—This lady is Mrs. Chichester—your aunt.

Peggy—Where's me uncle?

Hawkes—Alas, my dear child, your uncle is dead.

Peggy—Dead! Afther sendin' for me!

Hawkes—He died just before you sailed.

Peggy—God rest his soul! Sure, if I had known that, I'd never came at all, at all. I am too late then? Good day to yez. (Starts toward door).

Hawkes—(Stops her). Where are you going?

Peggy—Back to me father.

Hawkes—Nonsense!

Peggy—I must go back to me father if me uncle's dead.

Hawkes—It was Mr. Kingsnorth's last wish that you should stay here under your aunt's care so she has kindly consented to give you a home.

Peggy—(Staring at Mrs. C.). Have yez?

Mrs. C.—I have.

Peggy—Thank yez. (Bobs another courtesy).

Mrs. C.—(Mrs. C. puts hand to eyes. Peggy feels out of place.).

Peggy—(Aside to Hawkes). I can't stay here.

Hawkes—Why not?

Peggy—I would be happier with me father.

Hawkes—Nonsense! You will be quite happy here—quite happy.

Peggy—(To dog). They don't seem enthusiastic about us, do they? We are not wanted here, Michael. (Enter Jarvis).

Mrs. C.—Jarvis, relieve Miss O'Connell of that dirty filthy dog and take those bundles to her room.

Peggy—Oh, no, ma'am. Please leave Michael with me Do not take him away from me.

Mrs. C.—Jarvis, take it away and never leave it inside the house again.

Peggy—Well, if you don't want him inside your house, you don't want me inside your house.

Hawkes—Oh, come, come. Miss O'Connell. You can see the dog whenever you want to. Come, let me have him. (Reaches for dog).

Peggy—No, I won't give him up—I won't. I had hard enough time getting him ashore, I did. (Hawkes pleads). No. I will not give him up and that is all there is about it.

Hawkes—Come now, Miss O'Connell. You really must be reasonable.

Peggy—I don't care to be reasonable. Michael was given to me by me father. He is not very big and he's not a watch dog. He's a pet dog. (Catches sight of poodle in Ethel's lap). Look! She has a dog in the house—right here in the house. Look at it! (Laughs). I didn't know what it was until it moved.

Hawkes—Now, Miss O'Connell, won't you please? (Peggy finally yields Michael to lawyer who hands him to Jarvis who takes him holding him at arms' length. Peggy opens grip in presence of all in great hurry, takes out handkerchief and small picture. Hands bundle to Jarvis)

Peggy—(Patting Michael's head). Ye won't hurt him, will ye? And I would be much obliged to you if you will give him some water and a bone. He loves mutton bones. (Jarvis exits U.C. Peggy looks at Alaric. He amuses her). Ye must know Michael is simply crazy about mutton. He *loves* mutton.

Mrs. C.—Now come here.

Peggy—(Takes another look at Alaric, smiles to herself, then X's to Mrs. C.). Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. C.—Look at me.

Peggy.—Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. C.—Do not call me ma'am.

Peggy—No, ma'am,—er,—ant, ant.

Mrs. C.—Aunt, not ant.

Peggy—Are you my uncle Nat's widdy.

Mrs. C.—(Sharply). No, I am not.

Peggy—Then how are you my—aunt?

Mrs. C.—I am your mother's sister.

Peggy—Oh! Then your name is Monica.

Mrs. C.—It is.

Peggy—Now what d'ye think of that.—You don't look a bit like my dear mother did. (Looks at picture).

Mrs. C.—What have you there?

Peggy—My dear mother's picture.

Mrs. C.—Let me see it. (Peggy shows it to her but retains hold on it). She had changed very much since I last saw her,—and in one year,—

Peggy—Sorrow and poverty did that, Aunt Monica.

Mrs. C.—That will be quite sufficient. Put it away. (Peggy hides picture in bosom). Sit down.

Peggy—Thank you, ant,—er aunt. (Sprawls in big chair, looks from one to another, catches glimpse of Alaric and laughs again). Sure, I had no idea in the wurrld that I had such fine relations, although, of course, me father said to me, "Now, Peg," he would say "You have got some grand folks on your mother's side.

Alaric—Folks! Really!—Eh, Ethel!

Peggy—Yes. That's what he said.—"grand folks on your mother's side."

Mrs. C.—That will do. Do not sprawl in that way. Sit up. Try and remember where you are. Look at your cousin.

Peggy—(Looks at Ethel, then chuckles to herself). Is she my cousin?

Mrs. C.—She is.

Alaric—And I am Cousin Alaric.

Peggy—(Looks all around. To Ethel). Where is your husband?

Mrs. C.—Her husband!

Peggy—Yes, I saw her husband when I came in here first. I have been in this room before you know. I came in through the window and she was here with her husband. She was—

Alaric—What in Heaven's name does she mean?

Peggy—I tell you, it was she who sent me to the kitchen,—she and him.

Alaric—Who in the world does she mean?

Ethel—Mr. Brent.

Peggy—Sure, she thought I was a servant looking for a place and Mr. Hawkes told me not to say a wurrd until he came,—and I didn't say a wurrd.

Hawkes—My time is short. Miss O'Connell, it was your uncle's wish that you should make your home here with Mrs. Chichester. She will give you every possible advantage and make you a happy well-cared-for charming young lady—

Peggy—(Laughs). Lady? Me? Sure now—

Hawkes—You must do everything she tells you and try to please her in all things. On the first day of every month I will call and find out what progress you are making. (Gives Mrs. Chichester card). This is my business address should you wish to communicate with me. Now I must take my leave.

Peggy—(X's to him, catches him by sleeve as he takes his hat). Please sir, take me with you and send me back to New York. I had rather go home, indade I would. I don't want to be a lady. I want my father. Please take me with you.

Hawkes—O, come, come!

Peggy—I want to go back to my father. Indade I do. He mightn't like me to stay here now that my uncle is dead.

Hawkes—Why, it was your uncle's last wish that you should come here. Your father will be delighted at your good fortune. (Seating her back in chair). Your aunt will do everything in her power to make you feel at home, won't you, Mrs. Chichester?

Mrs. C.—I will, of course.

Peggy—Do send me back to me father.

Hawkes—Nonsense, my dear Miss O'Connell! You would not disappoint your father in that way, would you? Wait for a month. I'll call on the 1st and I am expecting to hear only the most charming things about you. Now, Good-bye. (Takes Peggy's hand).

Peggy—Good-bye, sir, and thank you very much for being so kind to me.

Alaric—Have a cab?

Hawkes—No, thank you, I have no luggage and like to walk. Good day. (Exit U.C.).

Mrs. C.—Your name is Margarette?

Peggy—No, ma'am—er ant—or aunt,—I beg your pardin aunt—my name is Peg.

Mrs. C.—That is only a corruption. We will call you Margarette.

Peggy—I would not know myself as Margarette. Indade I would not. I might forget to answer to the name of Margarette. My name is Peg. My father always calls me Peg. It would put me in mind of me father if you would let me be called Peg, aunt.

Mrs. C.—Kindly leave your father out of the conversation.

Peggy—Then it is all I will leave him out of.

Mrs. C.—No temper, if you please. (Motions Peg to sit down). You must take my daughter as your model in all things. (Peg looks at Ethel and smiles to herself). Everything my daughter does you must try to imitate. You could not have a better example. Mold yourself on her.

Peggy—Imitate her, is it?

Mrs. C.—As far as lies in your power.

Peggy—(Imitatingly). Please don't! It is so hot this morning. (Laughs).

Mrs. C.—How dare you!

Peggy—(Looks at her). Mustn't I laugh in the house?

Mrs. C.—You have a great deal to learn.

Peggy—Yes, aunt.

Mrs. C.—Your education will begin to-morrow.

Peggy—Sure, that will be foine.

Mrs. C.—No levity, if you please.

Peggy—No, aunt.

Mrs. C.—Until some decent clothes can be purchased for you, we will have to find some from my daughter's wardrobe.

Peggy—Sure, I have a beautiful dress in my satchel I go to Mass in on Sunday. It is silk and—

Mrs. C.—That will do. Alaric will you ring please. (He does so. Peggy looks at him

and laughs to herself). You must realize that you have an opportunity few girls in your position are given. I only hope you will try to repay our interest and your late uncle's wish by obedience, good conduct and hard study.

Peggy—Yes, aunt.—I hope you don't mind my not having worn my silk dress but you see I could not wear it on the steamer,—it would've got all wet. Ye have to wear travellin' clothes when yer travellin'.

Mrs.—That will do.

Peggy—Well, I don't want ye to think my father don't buy me pretty clothes. He's very proud of me and I of him—

Mrs. C.—That will do. (Enter Jarvis). Tell Bennett to show my neice to the mauve room and to attend to her. (To Peg). Go with him.

Peggy—Yes, aunt. I'm going to try and do everything you want me to. I will, indade I will—I'm sure I'm very grateful to you for taking me to live with you, indade. An' me father will be too, but ye see it is all so strange to me here and I'm so far away and I misses me father so much. (Jarvis has crossed up to landing stairs waiting).

Mrs. C.—Go with him. (Peg X's up to him and follows him off, taking a last look at them as she exits. All three look at each other a second).

Alaric—Awful.

Mrs. C.—Terrible.

Ethel—Dreadful.

Alaric—It is our lucky day, mater.

Mrs. C.—One thing is absolutely necessary. She must be kept away from every one at present.

Alaric—Well, I should say so.—Good Lord! Jerry! He must not see her. He would laugh his head off at the idea of my having a relative like that. He will probably run in to lunch.

Mrs. C.—Then she must remain in her room until he is gone. I will go into town now and order some things for her and see about tutors.

Ethel—Why put up with this inconvenience at all?

Mrs. C.—The one thousand pounds,—that is the reason,—and rather than you or Alaric should make any sacrifice, dear, or suffer any discomfort, I would put up with far worse.

Ethel—Yes, I suppose you would. I wouldn't. (Runs up stairs to exit).

Alaric—Where are you for now, Ethel?

Ethel—To try and make up my mind, if I can, about something. The coming of Peg may do it for me. (Exits off door R at head of first landing).

Alaric—(As Mrs. C. starts to exit D.R.) Wait a moment, mater. I will go with you as far as the station and see if I can't head Jerry off. His train is almost due if it is punctual (They exit together).

(Peggy enters again, looks around and comes down stairs. X's to piano. Enter Bennett, the maid).

Bennett—Mrs. Chichester left word that you were not to leave your room without permission. I was just going to tell you.

Peggy—You tell Mrs. Chichester that I am not going to do anything of the kind. As long as I stay in the house, I will see every bit of it.

Bennett—You will only get me into trouble. (She exits off L).

Peggy—No I won't. I wouldn't get you into trouble for the world. I'll get all the trouble and I'll get it now. (X's to Door R, opens it and hollers). Ant,—er aunt! Cousin! Aunt! Come here, I want to tell you about myself.

Bennett—(Off stage). They have all gone out.

Peggy—Then what are you making such a fuss about? You go out too. (Hums. Looking at different things about the room; finally sees statue of Cupid). Ye darlin'! Faith, it's you that causes all the mischief in the world, ye divil, ye. (Sits at piano and plays and sings):

"Oh! the days are gone when beauty bright,
My heart charm wove!
When my dream of life from morn till night
Was love still love
New hope may bloom and days may come
Of milder calmer beam,
But there's nothing half so sweet in life,
As Love's young Dream."

(During this time, a storm arises outside. Lightning, etc., not too loud).

Jerry—(Enters, coat collar up, dog under his coat. Sees Peg). Hello. (Peggy frightened.

Lightning. Wind blows door open. Peggy runs and closes it).

Peggy—Shut it up! Shut it up! (X's to Jerry, takes Michael from him and takes him into the next room. Comes back and closes door.). (Defiantly). Don't go near my dog, sir, don't go near him!

Jerry—Does the dog belong to you?

Peggy—What were you doing with him?

Jerry—I found him barking at a very high-spirited mare.

Peggy—Mare! Where?

Jerry—Tied to the stable door.

Peggy—The stable door! So that's where they put Michael. (Lightning scares her).

Jerry—Don't be frightened. It is only a summer storm.

Peggy—Summer or winter, they shrivel me up

Jerry—(X's up to window). Come and look at it. They are beautiful in this part of the country. Come and watch it.

Peggy—I will not watch it. (Flashes). Shut it up. They say, you look at the sky when the lightning comes, you can see the Kingdom of Heaven and the sight of it blinds some and kills others, according to the state of Grace you are in.

Jerry—Then you are a Catholic.

Peggy—Then what else would I be. (Thunder). Don't it seem that He is angry with us for our sins?

Jerry—With me, perhaps,—not with you.

Peggy—What do you mean by that?

Jerry—You don't know what sin is.

Peggy—And who may ye be that talk to me like that?

Jerry—My name is Jerry.

Peggy—Jerry!

Jerry—Yes. What is yours?

Peggy—Peg.

Jerry—Peg, eh?

Peggy—(Looks a moment at him). Jerry what?

Jerry—Just plain Jerry and you are Peg.

Peggy—Just plain Peg.

Jerry—I can't agree with you. I think you are very charming.

Peggy—Ye must't say things to me like that when it's thunderin' and lightnin' outside.

Jerry—I mean it.

Peggy—No, you don't mean it. A man who means them things never says them. Me father always told me to be careful of the fellow that sez flatterin' things right to me face. "He's no good, Peg, me girl," my father says, "He's no good."

Jerry—Your father is right, only his doctrine hardly applies in this case. I didn't mean it as flattery,—just a plain statement of fact,—who are you?

Peggy—I am me aunt's neice.

Jerry—And who is your aunt?

Peggy—Mrs. Chis—ter.

Jerry—Whom?

Peggy—My aunt is Mrs. Chis—ter.

Jerry—Oh, Mrs. Chichester.

Peggy—That's it.

Jerry—How extraordinary.

Peggy—Isn't it? You never would expect a fine lady like her to have a neice like me, would ye?

Jerry—That isn't what I mean.

Peggy—Yes, it's what ye mean. Don't tell me untruths when the storm's ragin'.

Jerry—I was thinking that I do not remember Alaric ever telling me that he had such a charming cousin.

Peggy—(Laughs). Oh, do you know Alaric?

Jerry—Very well. (Peg laughs). Why do you laugh?

Peggy—I'd like me father to see Alaric for one moment.

Jerry—Indeed!

Peggy—Yes, indade. You *know* Alaric, do you? Isn't it funny how the name suits him,—Alaric,—There are very few people a name like that would get along with. (Laughs). It fits him all right, doesn't it? Well, he didn't know that I was alive until I dropped from the clouds this morning.

Jerry—Where did you drop from?

Peggy—Clear from New York.

Jerry—Really! How odd!

Peggy—Not at all. It is nearly as big as London and there is nothing odd about New York.

Jerry—Were you born there?

Peggy—I was.

Jerry—By the way of Old Ireland, eh?

Peggy—Sure, an' how did ye guess it?

Jerry—Your slight but delightful accent.

Peggy—Accent, is it. Sure an' I got no accent. I just speak naturally. It's you who have the accent to my way of thinkin'.

Jerry—Really!

Peggy—Wah ye bawn theah?

Jerry—(Laughs). How would you say it?

Peggy—I would say it naturally,—Were ye born there,—; would , an' not twist the poor English language any worse than it already is.

Jerry—(Laughs). (X's to window—). The storm is over. The air is clear of electricity All the anger is gone from the Heavens. See!

Peggy—Praise be to God for that.

Jerry—(X-ing to her). Are you going to stay here?

Peggy—Maybe I will and maybe I won't.

Jerry—Did your au.t send for you?

Peggy—No, me uncle did.

Jerry—Indeed!

Peggy—Yes, indade. Me Uncle Nat.

Jerry—Nat!

Peggy—Nathaniel Kingsnorth,—Rest his sowl!

Jerry—Nathaniel Kingsnorth!

Peggy—Sleepin' in is grave, poor man!

Jerry—Why then you are Miss Margarette O'Connell?

Peggy—I am. How did you guess it?

Jerry—I was with your uncle when he died.

Peggy—Ye were?

Jerry—He told me all about you.

Peggy—Did he. Well I wish the poor man 'ud 'av lived,—an' I wish he'd a thought of us sooner,—he with all his money an' me father with none and me his sister's own child

Jerry—What does your father do?

Peggy—Sure an' me father can do anything at all,—except make money and when he do make it he can't kape it. He doesn't like it enough. Nayther do I. We've never had much to like but we've seen others around us with plenty and Faith, we have been the happiest, we have. There's been times when we have most starved but me father never lost his pluck, nor his spirits. Nayther did I. Even at the worst I've never heard a word of complainin' from me father. Even now I get so lonesome for him. I'm going back to him now. Good-bye. (Starts to steps).

Jerry—Wait! Please wait. Give us one month,—until,—one month. It will be very little out of your life and I promise you your father will not suffer through it except in losing you for that one little month.

Peggy—Why do you want me to stay?

Jerry—Because your late uncle was my friend. It was his last wish to do something for you. Will you? Just one month.

Peggy—All right then. I'll stay a month but no longer than that though.

Jerry—Not unless you wish it and I am glad you are going to stay.

Peggy—Well, it's a comfort to know some one will be pleased at my stayin'.

Jerry—I am,—immensely.

Peggy—All right—ye've said it.

Jerry—Will you look on me as your friend.

Peggy—Sure, there is time enough for that.

Jerry—Is it so hard?

Peggy—I don't know whether it is hard or aisy, until I try it.

Jerry—Then try.

Peggy—I never had any one makin' such a fuss about havin' me for a friend before. I don't understand ye at all.

Jerry—I am very simple.

Peggy—I don't doubt ye. From what I have seen and heard of them most of the English are simple. (Jerry laughs and extends hand). What's that for?

Jerry—To our friendship.

Peggy—I never saw the like of ye in all my life.

Jerry—Come Peg.

Peggy—I don't think it necessary.

Jerry—Come. (She looks at him and unconsciously gives hand). Friendship Peg.

Peggy—Not yet anyway.

Jerry—I'll wager we will be.

Peggy—Don't put much on it. Ye might lose.

Jerry—I would stake my life on it.

Peggy—You don't value it much then.

Jerry—More than I did. May you be happy amongst us, Peg.

(All talk off stage).

Peggy—(In panic). Don't tell anyone you saw me. (Starts upstairs, runs in to Ethel. Enter Alaric and Mrs. C. U.C.)

Jerry—(In general to all). Hello! (Peg stops at foot of stairs).

Alaric—Sorry, old chap, we were out. You'll stay to lunch.

Jerry—It is what I came for. First let me say, Alaric, your cousin is adorable.

Alaric—What! You have met her?

Jerry—Indeed I have and we had a most delightful time together. I want to see a great deal of her while she is here.

Alaric—You're joking.

Jerry—Not at all. She has a frank honest grip on life that I like better than anything in mankind or womankind. She has made me a convert to Home Rule already.

(Dinner gong).

Alaric—Come along every one. Lunch.

Jerry—Thank Goodness. I am starving.

Peggy—(Comes from behind pillar). So am I. I haven't had a bite since six.

Jerry—Allow me. (Offers arm to Peg, she takes it).

Mrs C.—My neice is tired after her journey. She will lunch in her room.

Peggy—O, I am not a bit tired. Not tired at all and I'd rather have lunch down there with you all and Mr. Jerry.

Mrs. C.—What!

Peggy—Well, I mean to say—

Jerry—And you shall go in with Mr. Jerry. With your permission we will lead the way. Come Peg.

Peggy—Thanks. I am not so sure about that wager of yours. I think your life is safe but I want to tell you you've saved mine. (Exit arm in arm with Jerry). (Mrs. C., Alaric and Ethel look at each other aghast).

CURTAIN

ACT 2

ACT 2.—Scene set same as Act 1.

At rise Peg discovered on floor down C. surrounded with a lot of books atlas, dictionary, etc. She is reading as Brent enters from U.C. and he watches her for a second. She does not know he is in the room.

Brent—That book must be absorbing. What is it? (Peg rises hastily and puts book she was reading behind her. Is angry at being disturbed).

Brent—You must not be angry with me. What is it, eh? Something forbidden. (He snatches for book). Show it to me. (Peg runs across room, turns up end of rug at foot of stairs, puts book under it and puts foot on it). A hiding-place, eh? Now you make me really curious. Let me see it. (Peg clenches fist). I love spirit. What a wonderful change in a month. You most certainly would not be sent to the kitchen now. Do you know you have grown into a delightful young lady and when you are angry you are really attractive and you are angry with me, aren't you? I am sorry if I have offended you. Let us kiss and be friends. (Embraces her. Peg slaps his face as Ethel enters on steps. Peg, panting, looks at both, then exits U.C.) (Brent X's to Ethel as she descends). My dear!

Ethel—(Coldly). Why did she run away?

Brent—I surprised one of her secrets and she flew into a temper. Did you see her strike me?

Ethel—Secrets!

Brent—(X's and takes book from under rug). You see here, "Love Stories of the World—to Peg from Jerry." Oh! Ho! Jerry, oh! No wonder she didn't want me to see it. (Replaces book under rug). So that is how the land lies. Romantic little child.

Ethel—Why didn't you go after her?

Brent—Ethel!

Ethel—She is new and has all the virtues.

Brent—(Stiffly). I assure you.

Ethel—You needn't. If there is one thing I am convinced of, it is your assurance.

Brent—Really!—Ethel—

Ethel—Were you carried away again?

Brent—Do you think for one moment—

Ethel—Yes, I do.

Brent—I don't know what you can imagine—

Ethel—It is unnecessary to explain.

Brent—Surely you are not jealous—of a—of a child.

Ethel—No. I don't think it is jealousy.

Brent.—But what is it?

Ethel—(Disgusted). Now I can understand why the scullery is sometimes the rival of the drawing room—the love of change.

Brent—This is not worthy of you.

Ethel—That is what rankles. It isn't. You're not.

Brent—Ethel!

Ethel—If that ever happens again, I should have to amputate you—Chris, come here. There! It is over. I suppose I have been a little hard on you. All forgiven? (She gives hand. He kisses it). My nerves have been tried rather severely this past month. Put a mongrel into a kennel of thoroughbreds and they will either destroy the intruder or be in a continual condition of unsettled irritable tollerance. This is exactly my condition. I am unsettled, irritable and intolerable.

Brent—Then I have come in time.

Ethel—(Meaningly). So did I, didn't I? (Looks at where Peg exit).

Brent—Please don't.

Ethel—Very well, I won't—I'm sorry, Chris. A month ago it wouldn't have mattered much. Just now—it does. I had rather looked forward to seeing you. It is horrible here.

Brent—A month of misery for me too. I am through with it to-morrow. I'm going away.

Ethel—Where?

Brent—Petersburgh,—Moscow,—Siberia.

Ethel—Oh, the cold places,—going alone?

Brent—Unless someone goes with me.

Ethel—Naturally.

Brent—(Leans toward her). Will you,—go?

Ethel—Chris, I wish I had been here when you came—instead of that,—brat.

Alaric—(Enters from door R.). Hello, Brent. How are you?

Brent—(Evidently displeased). Very well, thank you, Alaric.

Alaric—Good. The dear wife well too?

Brent—(Coldly). Very!

Alaric—And the sweet child?

Brent—Yes.

Alaric—You must bring 'em along some time. The mater would love to see them and so would Ethel. Ethel loves babies, don't you dear? Talkin' of babies, have you seen Margarette anywhere?

Ethel—(Nods to garden). Out there.

Alaric—Splendid. The mater wants her. We have got to have a family meeting about her at once. Mater will be here in a moment. Don't hurry away Brent. (Exits).

Brent—(Brent X's to Ethel). I'll be waiting at the hotel. I will be there until morning. Send me a message will you? I'll wait up to-night for one.—Will you?

Ethel—Perhaps.

Brent—I am sorry if anything I have said or done has hurt you, believe me—

Ethel—Don't say any more.

Brent—Oh, if only,—(Ethel stops him as she sees mother who enters with maid).

Mrs. C.—How do you do, Mr. Brent. You will excuse me. (To maid): When did you see my niece last?

Bennett—Not this hour, madam.

Mrs. C.—Tell Jarvis to search the gardens,—the stables,—to look up and down the road.

Bennett—Yes, madam. (Exits U.C.)

Mrs. C.—You will pardon me, Mr. Brent,—

Brent—I am just leaving, Mrs. Chichester.

Mrs. C.—O, but you need not,—

Brent—I am going abroad to-morrow. I just called to say good-bye.

Mrs. C.—Indeed. Well, I hope you and Mrs. Brent have a very pleasant trip. You must both call the moment you return.

Brent—Thank you,—Good-bye, Mrs. Chichester,—and Ethel. (Looks meaningly at her. (Exit).

Alaric—(Runs in through door and flops into chair). Not a sign of Margarette anywhere.

Mrs. C.—This cannot go on.

Alaric—I should say not indeed. Running about all over the place.

Mrs. C.—(Holding open telegram). Mr. Hawkes telegraphs that he will call to-morrow for his first report. What can I tell him?

Alaric—What will you?

Mrs. C.—Am I to tell him that every tutor I have engaged for her resigned? Not one stays more than a week. Can I tell him that?

Alaric—You could, mater dear, but would it be wise?

Mrs. C.—Am I to tell him that no maid will stay with her? That she shows no desire to improve. That she mimics and angers her teachers and refuses to study and plays impish tricks like some mischievious little elf? Am I to tell him that?

Alaric—Serve her jolly well right if you did. Eh, Ethel?

Ethel—Yes, it would.

Bennett—(Enters with Jarvis). I have searched everywhere for madam and not a sign of her.

Jarvis—Not in the stables, nor up and down the road, and her dog is missing, madam.

Ethel—Pet?

Jarvis—No, madam. She is gnawin' a bone on the lawn. The other.

Mrs. C.—That will do. (Both exit off L). Where is she?

Alaric—Heaven only knows.

Mrs. C.—Oh, if I could only throw the whole business up.

Alaric—I wish to Goodness we could. But the monthly check will be useful to-morrow, mater.

Mrs. C.—That's it, that's it. (Despairingly).

Alaric—No one seems very anxious to snatch at my services as yet. Of course it's a dull time. Jerry says so. But there we are. Not two-pence coming in and the butchers to be paid likewise the other mouth fillers. Where is it coming from?

Mrs. C.—Have I not lain awake nights struggling with it?

Alaric—Well, I'll tell you what. Let her off lightly this time and the minute the lawyer bird is gone, read her the riot act. Pull her up with a jerk. Ride her on the curb and no rot.

Mrs. C.—We could try. Of course she has improved in her manner. For that we have to thank Ethel. Who could live near dear Ethel and not improve.

Alaric—Ah, here we have it!

Mrs. C.—But I do not know how much of the improvement is genuine or how much is pretended.

Alaric—There we go again. She's got us fairly gravelled.

Mrs. C.—Of course I can truthfully tell him that at times she is very tractible and obedient.

Alaric—At times. About two minutes a week. When Jerry's around. How on earth he puts up with her, I can't understand. She follows him about like a dog. Listens to him. Behaves herself. But the minute he's gone, Pouf! Back she goes to her old tricks. I tell you she's a freak.

Mrs. C.—Can I tell Mr. Hawkes that?

Alaric—No. But I do say the 1,000 a year is hardly enough. Nat should have made it 10,000. Dirt cheap at that. Tell him that out of respect for the dead man's wishes we would continue the job and that on the whole we have hopes. Slight,—but,—hopes.

Ethel—(Who has drifted to the window hears dog fight). Pet!

Mrs. C.—(Runs to door). Margarette.

Ethel—And the mongrel. She is urging him on. (Runs off).

Alaric—The terrier's got Pet now.

Mrs. C.—Margarette, do you hear me!

Alaric—Fight him, old girl! Maul him! Who, there. Stop it. Pet's down.

Mrs. C.—Go and separate them.

Alaric—Not me. Ethel can handle 'em. I hate these little messes of snarling smelly wool.

Ethel—(Enters with Pet. Sits down and makes fuss over dog).

(Enter Peggy with Michael, a dirty print of dog's feet on front of her dress).

Mrs. C.—Take that animal out of the room. (Peggy goes out, sits down on grass and plays with Michael). Margarette,—Margarette. Come here. Do you hear me?

Peggy—(Outside). I hear you.

Mrs. C.—Come in at once.

Peggy—Can Michael come in too?

Mrs. C.—Come in and leave that brute outside.

Peggy—If Michael can't come in, I don't want to.

Mrs. C.—Do as I tell you. Come here. (Peg ties dog to door knob and enters slowly). Where have you been?

Peggy—Down to the sea shore.

Mrs. C.—Have I not told you never to go out alone?

Peggy—Ye have.

Mrs. C.—How dare you disobey me?

Peggy—Sure I had to.

Mrs. C.—You had to?

Peggy—I did.

Mrs. C.—And why?

Peggy—Michael needed a bath so I took him down to the seashore and gave him one. He loves the water, he does.

Mrs. C.—Are there no servants?

Peggy—Sure there are.

Mrs. C.—Isn't that their province?

Peggy—It may be but they hate Michael and I hate them and I wouldn't let 'em touch him.

Mrs. C.—In other words, you wilfully disobeyed me.

Peggy—I did.

Mrs. C.—Is this the way my niece should behave?

Peggy—Maybe not. It is the way I behave though.

Mrs. C.—So my wishes count for nothing.

Peggy—Sure your wishes do count with me,—indade they do.

Mrs. C.—Don't say indade. There is no such word.—Indeed.

Peggy—I beg your pardon, aunt,—indeed I do.

Mrs. C.—Look at your dress.

Peggy—Michael did that. Sure an' they'll come off. (Curl falls over her eyes).

Mrs. C.—Can't you keep your hair out of your eyes. What do you think will become of you?

Peggy—I hope to go to Heaven like a good Catholic.

Mrs. C.—I give it up.

Alaric—I should say so. Such rubbish!

Mrs. C.—I do everything possible, but you,—I don't understand you.—I don't understand you!

Peggy—My father always said that and sure if he couldn't how could any one else?

Mrs. C.—Never mention your father. (Peg turns away). What is it, I wonder! What is it!

Peggy—What is what?

Mrs. C.—Is it that you do not wish to improve? Is that it?

Peggy—I'll tell you what I think it is. I think there is a little devil in me and every now and then, he jumps out.

Mrs. C.—A devil!

Peggy—Yes, aunt.

Mrs. C.—How dare you use such words to me.

Peggy—I don't. I use it about myself. I don't know whether ye have a devil in ye or not. I think I have.

Mrs. C.—To-morrow I am to give Mr. Hawkes my first report on you. (Peg laughs). What are you laughing at?

Peggy—I had a picture of what you are goin' to tell him.

Mrs. C.—Your manners are abominable.

Peggy—Yes, aunt.

Mrs. C.—What am I to tell Mr. Hawkes?

Peggy—Tell him the truth aunt, and shame the devil.

Mrs. C.—Margarette!

Peggy—I beg your pardon.

Mrs. C.—Do you wish to remain here?

Peggy—Sometimes I do and sometimes I don't.

Mrs. C.—Don't I do everything that is possible for you?

Peggy—Yes. You do everything possible to me,—

Mrs. C.—What!

Peggy—For me,—I mean for me. I should have said for me, ant,—or aunt.

Mrs. C.—Then why do you constantly disobey me?

Peggy—I suppose it is the original sin in me.

Mrs. C.—The what!

Alaric—O, I say now! That is good. Ha, ha! (Laughs heartily). Peg joins in and laughs heartily with him: then sits beside aunt).

Peggy—Whenever I did anything wilful or disturbin' as a child, my father always said it was the original sin in me and that I was not to be punished for it because I could not help it. Then he used to punish himself for my fault and when I saw it h him I would not do it again. At least for awhile. I think that was a grand way to bring up a laughter. I have been wondering since I have been here, if an aunt could bring up a niece the same way. Suppose, for instance, you were to punish yourself for everything wrong that I do I might be so soryr I'd never do it again,—of course, I might not. I am not sure about myself. I think my father knows me better than I do myself.

Mrs. C.—Your father must have been a very bad influence on you.

Peggy—(Indignantly). He was not. My father is the best man,—

Mrs. C.—Margarette.

Peggy—Well he is.

Mrs. C.—Haven't I told you never to contradict me?

Peggy—Well why do you contradict me all the time?

Mrs. C.—Stop.

Peggy—Well, there is nothing fair about your contradictin' me and me not be able to—

Mrs. C.—Will you stop?

Peggy—Well now, aunt, ye'll do me a favor if ye'll stop speakin' about my father the way you do. It hurts me, it does. I love my father and I,—I,—

Mrs. C.—Will—you—stop?

Peggy—I have stopped.

Mrs. C.—If I consent to take charge of you for a further period will you promise me you will do your best to show some improvement during the next month?

Peggy—Yes, aunt.

Mrs. C.—If I get fresh tutors for you will you try and keep them?

Peggy—Yes, aunt.

Mrs. C.—(To Alaric). What do you think?

Alaric—We must risk it, eh, Ethel?

Ethel—Don't ask me.

Mrs. C.—Very well. Begin to-night.

Peggy—Begin what?

Mrs. C.—To show that you mean to keep your promise. Work for awhile.

Peggy—What at?

Mrs. C.—At your books.

Peggy—Sure and I will. (Picks up books from all over room, takes them to table to study). (Jarvis enters).

Mrs. C.—Well!

Jarvis—(With card tray and card). For Miss Chichester, madam. (Gives to Ethel). By hand, Miss. (Ethel opens note and reads it).

Peggy—Jarvis, me dog Michael is outside there tied to the door. He's had a fight and he's tired. Will you put him to bed for me, like a good boy? (Jarvis scowls and exits).

Mrs. C.—Who's it from, Ethel?

Ethel—Mr. Brent.

Alaric—Brent! What on earth does he write to you for?

Ethel—He wants me to do something for him.

Alaric—Do something?

Ethel—Yes. Nothing very much. I'll answer it here. (Sits at desk and writes).

Mrs. C.—Come, Alaric. (Exits door off R). (Alaric X's to Peg).

Alaric—Original sin! That's a good one,—Study all the pretty maps and things. (Peg closes book with a slam). Little devil.

Peggy—He's tuggin' at me now. The devil must hate knowledge. He always tries to keep me from gettin' any.

Alaric—Watch your cousin. Model yourself on Ethel. Eh, what! (Dodges through door as Peg fires book at him).

Peggy—(Looks at Ethel who finishes letter, takes cigarette out of case and lights it neatly. Peg takes one off table and imitates her clumsily. Peg watches Ethel. Ethel turns and sees Peg for first time; throws cigarette on ash tray; Peg does same).

Ethel—Why do you watch me?

Peggy—Aunt told me to. Aren't ye me model. Sure I'm to mold myself on you. (Ethel starts to exit). May I talk to you?

Ethel—(Turns). You were told to study.

Peggy—Won't ye let me talk to ye? Please do. Ye have not said a kind word to me since I have been here,—sure we are both girls in the same house and pretty much the same age and yet you never look at me except as though ye hated me. Why ye like yer dog better than me. I am sorry Michael hurt him but it wasn't his fault. I set him on to do it and he always obeys me.

Ethel—You made him attack Pet?

Peggy—I did. No one could mistake Michael for anything but a dog but that thing. (Ethel starts to go). Don't go for a minute. Won't you make friends with me. You're not a bit happy now, are you, Ethel?

Ethel—No, I am not.

Peggy—Nor am I.—In this house couldn't we try to comfort each other?

Ethel—Comfort! You comfort me?

Peggy—Yes, Ethel dear. Me comfort you. They say a beautiful thot makes a beautiful face and by the same token sure a kind action gives ye a warm feelin' around the heart and ye might have that if ye'd only be a little kind to me,—some times.

Ethel—I am afraid I have been a little inconsiderate.

Peggy—You sure have.

Ethel—What would you like to have me do.

Peggy—I would like to spak to you sometimes as though I were a human bein' and not a clod o' earth.

Ethel—Very well, Margarette, I will. Good-night. (Starts again).

Peggy—Will ye give me another minute,—now,—please.

Ethel—(Looks at note in her hand for a second). All right.

Peggy—Only just a minute.

Ethel—What is it you want Margarette?

Peggy—Why shouldn't girls be taught to be honest with each other. I tell you if there was more honesty in the world there would not be half the sin in it.

Ethel—Really.

Peggy—Let's be honest with each other, Ethel.

Ethel—What do you mean?

Peggy—You like Mr. Brent, don't you?

Ethel—Certainly I like Mr. Brent. He is a very old friend of the family.

Peggy—He's got a wife?

Ethel—He has.

Peggy—And a baby?

Ethel—Yes, a baby.

Peggy—Of course I have never seen the wife or the baby since he never seems to bring them when he calls but I have often heard Alaric asking after them.

Ethel—I suppose it is too much to expect that a child of the common people should understand the customs of decent people.

Peggy—Maybe it is but I don't see why the common people should have all the decency and aristocracy then.

Ethel—Be good enough never to speak to me again as long as you are in this house. If I had my way, you would leave it this moment, as it is,—as it is,—(Enter Jerry). (Ethel tries to compose herself. X's over and addresses envelope) Good evening, Jerry. (Rings bell—Jarvis enters, she hands him letter). Send this at once. No answer. (exit Jarvis).

Jerry—How is Miss Peg this evening?

Peggy—Fine, Mr. Jerry, thank you. Let me take your hat and coat.

■

Jerry—No, thank you. I am not going to stay.

Peggy—Aren't you?

Jerry—Is your aunt in?

Peggy—Yes, she's in. Is it her you've called to see?

Jerry—Yes. I came over to ask Mrs. Chichester's permission to take you two young ladies to a dance to-night. It is just across from here in the assembly rooms.

Ethel—It is very kind of you but it is quite impossible. I do not care for dancing and besides my head aches.

Peggy—(Disappointed). Oh dear.

Jerry—I would have given you more notice only it was made up on the spur of the moment. Do you suppose your mother would allow Miss Margarette to go?

Ethel—I will ask her. (Exit).

Jerry—Do you think she will let you go?

Peggy—I do *not*. Mr. Jerry, will you take me all the same if aunt doesn't consent? I'm going to creep down here and you will meet me at the foot of the path. It is no use saying anything. I am going to that dance. So make up your mind to it.

Jerry—How are your studies progressing?

Peggy—Just the same as they always have,—not at all.

Jerry—Why not?

Peggy—I don't like studying.

Jerry—Are you going through life doing the things you like?

Peggy—What do I want to learn about dead kings and mountains. I don't want to learn it.

Jerry—Is it fair to your aunt?

Peggy—No, I don't suppose so.

Jerry—Is it fair to yourself?

Peggy—That's right! Scold me! Lecture me! You sound just like me aunt, ye do.

Jerry—But you will be at such a disadvantage by and by with other young ladies without half your intelligence just because they know things you refuse to learn. Then you will be ashamed.

Peggy—Are you ashamed of me? Because I am ignorant?

Jerry—Not at all. I was just the same at your age. I used to scrap at school and shirk at college until I found myself so far behind fellows I despised that I was ashamed. Then I went after them tooth and nail until I caught them up and passed them.

Peggy—*You* did!

Jerry—I did.

Peggy—I will too. Indeed I will. From now on I will do everything they tell me and learn everything they teach me if it kills me.

Jerry—I wish you would, Peg.

Peggy—And when I pass every one else and know more than any one ever knew, will you be proud of me?

Jerry—Yes, Peg, even more than I am now.

Peggy—Are you now?

Jerry—I am. Proud to think you are my friend.

Peggy—You've won your wager. We are friends, aren't we?

Jerry—"He came but for friendship and took away love." Who was that by?

Peggy—Tom Moore. Isn't that beautiful?

Jerry—Do you believe it?

Peggy—Didn't Tom Moore write it?

Jerry—Is there anything better than friendship between man and woman?

Peggy—Indeed there is. My father felt it for my mother or I wouldn't be here now. (Jerry laughs). My father loved my mother with all his strength and soul.

Jerry—Could you feel it,—have you felt it?

Peggy—All my life.

Jerry—As a child perhaps. Sometime it will come to you as a woman and then the whole world will change for you.

Peggy—I know. I felt it comin.'

Jerry—Since when?

Peggy—Ever since,—ever since,—Oh I didn't want to improve myself. Now I wish I had been born a lady. I'd be more worthy of,—

Jerry—What? Whom?

Peggy—I want knowledge now. I know what you mean by bein' at a disadvantage. I used to despise learnin'. I've laughed at it. Why I can't talk your language. Every wurd I say is wrong. That book ye give me, "The Love Stories of the World." I have never seen

anything like it. I never knew of such people? I did not dream what a wonderful power in the world was the power of Love. I used to think it something to keep to yourself and never speak of in the open. Now I know it is the only great big wonderful power in the world. It's my love for my father that kept faith and hope alive in me heart—I was happy with him. I never wanted to leave him and now I see there is other happiness too,—and it is beyond me. I am no one's equal. I am just a little Irish nothing,—

Jerry—Don't say that.

Peggy—There's one obstinate bad something in me that holds me back every time I want to go forward. Sometimes the good little something tries so hard to win but the bad hates it.

Jerry—What you call the bad is the cry of youth that resents being curbed and the good is the woman in you struggling for an outlet.

Peggy—Will you help me give it an outlet, Jerry?

Jerry—In any way in my power, Peggy.

Peggy—Thank you for promising to help me, Mr. Jerry,—but,—would you mind very much if the bad little something had one more spurt before I killed it altogether,—would you?

Jerry—Why, how do you mean?

Peggy—Take me to the dance to-night. Even without my aunt's permission. Will you? I will never forget it if you will and it will be the last wrong I'll ever do. I am just burning all over at the thought of it. My heart's burstin' for it. (Hums waltz and dances to it as Mrs. Chichester comes down steps).

Mrs. C.—What does this mean?

Jerry—I want you to do something that will make this child very happy. Will you allow her to go to the dance at the assembly rooms to-night?

Mrs. C.—Certainly not. I am surprised at you for asking such a thing.

Jerry—I beg your pardon. The invitation was also extended to your daughter but she declined. I thought you might be pleased to give your niece this little pleasure.

Mrs. C.—Go to a dance!—Unchaperoned!—

Jerry—My mother and sisters will be there.

Mrs. C.—A child of her age?

Peggy—A child is it! I would have you know my father lets me go anywhere,—

Mrs. C.—Margarette!

Peggy—Please let me go. I will study my head off to-morrow if you will only let me dance my feet a bit off to-night. Please let me go.

Mrs. C.—(To Jerry). It was most kind of you to trouble to come over. You must pardon me if I seem ungracious,—but it is out of the question.

Jerry—(Peg starts to talk. Jerry motions her to keep silence. Mrs. C. does not see this). Good night! (Takes hat and X's to door U.C.).

Mrs. C.—Kindly remember me to your mother and sisters.

Jerry—I will.

Peggy—Good night, Mr. Jerry. (Motions signifying that she will meet him outside as Jerry exits. Mrs. C. catches her doing so.)

Mrs. C.—What did you mean by dancing in that disgraceful manner and what did you mean by those signs you were making. (Peggy bows head). Will you always be a disgrace to us? Will you never learn to behave?

Peggy—Yes, aunt,—I am never going to do anything again to annoy yez,—after to-night. I am going to wurrk too,—after to-night. Don't you see at what a disadvantage I would be with girls without half my intelligence if I don't. I can see now I would.—I'd be ashamed,—that's what I would be. I am going after them tooth and nail and I am going to catch them up and pass them. He'll,—You'll be proud of me, that ye will.

Mrs. C.—(Amazed). What is all this!

Peggy—It is what I'm going to do,—after to-night.

Mrs. C.—I am very glad to hear it.

Peggy—I knew you would be an' I'll never be any more trouble to you,—after to-night.

Mrs. C.—I hope you will be of the same mind in the morning.

Peggy—So do I, aunt. Do you mind if I stay up for another hour? I would like to begin [illegible].

Mrs. C.—Begin what?

Peggy—Tryin' to pass people,—tooth and nail. May I study for just one hour?

Mrs. C.—Very well, then. Just an hour.

Peggy—Sure an' that will be fine.

Mrs. C.—Turn off the lights when you have finished.

Peggy—Yes, aunt. Are you going to bed now?

Mrs. C.—I am.

Peggy—Everyone in the house going to bed except me?

Mrs. C.—Every one.

Peggy—That's good.

Mrs. C.—Don't make a noise.

Peggy—Not a sound, aunt.

Mrs. C.—Good-night, then. (X's up stairs and Peg stops her on the balcony). Good-night, aunt.—Oh, there's something else. I thot perhaps I would have to be going back home to me father but I had a letter from him this morning an' it was quite cheerful so I think,—if you don't mind, -I would like to stay another month. Can I?

Mrs. C.—We will talk it over with Mr. Hawkes in the morning. (Exits into her room).

Peggy—(Watches her off, X's to lights and turns them down. Listens for any sounds. Runs to her room. Returns with hat and coat. Hurries into them. Stands in doorway U.C.). Will Jerry wait for me.

(Ethel enters from her room with travelling bag, coat and hat. Meets Peg U.C.)

Peggy—Ethel!

Ethel—You!

Peggy—Please don't tell anyone you have seen me.

Ethel—You go back to your room. What are you doing with your wraps?

Peggy—I am going to the dance. You won't tell my aunt, will you? She would send me away and I don't want to go away now,—indeed I don't.

Ethel—To the dance!

Peggy—Yes. I am going with Jerry. Your mother would not let me go so Jerry is coming back for me when you are all in bed and I know I'll enjoy it ever so much. You won't tell her, will you?

Ethel—I will most certainly see that she knows of it.

Peggy—You will?

Ethel—I shall. You have no right to go.

Peggy—Why are you so hard on me, Ethel?

Ethel—Because I detest you.

Peggy—I am sorry. You have spoiled my pleasure. Good night, Ethel,—What are you doing here at this time of the night and dressed like that,—and with that bag. What does it mean? Where are you going?

Ethel—Are you going to your room?

Peggy—(Suddenly X's close to her—horror stricken). Are you going with him,—

Ethel—Keep down your voice you little fool. (Silencing her).

Peggy—As I was standing there at the door just now I saw him and Mr. Jerry took him away.

Ethel—Who?

Peggy—Mr. Brent. (Ethel goes quickly to the window. Peg catches her wrist). Were you going with him? Were you?

Ethel—Take your hands off me.

Peggy—Were you going with him?—Answer me.

Ethel—Yes.—I am.

Peggy—So help me Heaven, you are not.

Ethel—Let me go.

Peggy—You are not going out of this house to-night if I have to wake every one in it.

Ethel—Wake them, little fool, wake them. Do you think they could stop me. Nothing can stop me now. I am sick of this living on charity,—sick of seeing you every day. An implied insult in your every look. As much as to say: "I am keeping the roof over you." I am giving you your daily food." I am sick of it. Let me go, will you,—

Peggy—What do you mean by insult,—an' daily bread,—an' kapin' the roof over ye. What are you ravin' about at all?

Ethel—I am at the end to-night. I am going.

Peggy—Ye are not goin' away with him I tell ye. Ye are not. What do you suppose you would be going to? I'll tell ye,—a wakin' an' a sleepin' Hell,—that's what it would be.

Ethel—Let me go I tell you.

Peggy—You took him away from his wife and his baby.

Ethel—He hates them and I hate this. I tell you I am going.

Peggy—You would break your poor mother's heart and his wife's just to satisfy your own pleasure. Well, I am glad I sinned to-night in doin' what I wanted to do since it has given me a chance to save you from doin' the most shameful thing a woman ever did.

Ethel—Will you—

Peggy—You will stay here and he will go back to his home, even if I have to tell every

one and disgrace ye both.

Ethel—No, no, you must not do that. You must not do that.

Peggy—You just told me your own mother couldn't stop ye.

Ethel—My mother must not know, she mustn't know. Let me go. He is waiting and it is past the time——

Peggy—Let him wait. He gave his name and his love to a woman and it is your duty to protect her and the child she brought him.

Ethel—I would kill myself first.

Peggy—No ye wouldn't. You won't kill yourself at all. You might have if you had gone with him. Why that's the kind of a man that tires of you in an hour and leaves you to sorrow alone. Doesn't he want to leave the woman now that he swore to cherish at the Altar of God? What do you suppose he would do for one he took no oath with at all. Have some sense about ye. I know him and his kind very well. It's no compliment he's payin' ye either. Faith! he would have made love to me if I had let him.

Ethel—What! To you?

Peggy—Yes. To me. Here in this room to-day. If you had not come in when you did I would have taught him a lesson he would have carried to his grave, so he would.

Ethel—He tried to make love to you!

Peggy—Ever since I have been here and to-day he came toward me with his arms stretched out: "Kiss me and make friends," says he,—an' you walked in.

Ethel—Is that the truth?

Peggy—On me poor mother's memory, it is, Ethel.

Ethel—(Sinks into chair). The wretch!—The wretch!

Peggy—That's what he is and you would give your life into his keeping to blacken it so no decent man or woman would ever look at you or speak to you again.

Ethel—No, it is over. That is over. (Crying). I hate myself. Oh, I hate myself.

Peggy—(Takes her bag and puts it on piano). Ethel ,acushla! Don't do that darlin', don't. He's not worth it. Keep your life and your heart clean until the only man in the world comes to you with his heart pure too and then you'll know what real happiness means. (Ethel continues to cry). Sure then, cry dear, and wash away all the sins of this night. It is the salt of your tears that cleanses your heart and falls like Holy water on your soul. Shoo,—There, there, stop now and go back to your room and sleep until morning and with the sunlight the last thought of all this will go from you. Sh! There now, don't. Not a word of what has happened here to-night will cross my lips. Go to your room and I will watch by your side 'til mornin'. (Helps her up). Lean on me. That's right. Don't cry any more or you'll wake up the whole house. (They start to ascend staircase. Peg accidently bumps up against post on bannister D. and stage glass globe falls from top to ground with awful crash. Peg puts Ethel back in chair quickly). Holy Mother! The whole house will be awake. Give me your hat and coat quick. (Runs over and throws hat and coat under piano and puts on Ethel's). Now remember you came only because you heard me. You were not going out of the house at all. You just heard me moving about here. They are coming! Remember! (Gets bag from piano).

Alaric—(Enters from his room in bath robe, electric flashlight in hand. Mrs. C. enters on balcony with night lamp: partly dressed and in kimona). Take care, mother. Keep back let me deal with them.

Mrs. C.—The sound came from over here, dear.

Alaric—Stay up there, I'll soon find out what it is. (Flashes light around which finally plays on Jarvis who has entered).

Jarvis—Please don't do that. It is only me.

Alaric—What are you doing here?

Jarvis—I heard a disturbance of some kind and came down to investigate, sir.

Alaric—Guard that door then and let no one pass. If there's any one trespassing, I'll deal with them.

(Flashlight plays on Peg and Ethel—D.R.).

Alaric—Ethel!

Mrs. C.—Margarette!

Alaric—(Crosses to switch and turns on lights). Well, I mean to say!

Mrs. C.—(Comes down). (To Jarvis): That will do. (Exit Jarvis).

Alaric—What are you two girls playing at?

Mrs. C.—Now what is the meaning of this?

Peggy—Sure, Ethel heard me and came in—

Mrs. C.—What were you doing here?

Peggy—I was going out when Ethel heard me and came in and stopped me—

Mrs. C.—Where were you going?

Peggy—Just out,—out there. (Points to window).

Mrs C.—Why that is Ethel's cloak?

Peggy—Sure, and this is her hat I have on and here is her bag. (Gives bag to Mrs. C. who opens it and finds Ethel's jewel box).

Mrs. C.—Her jewel box! Where did you get this?

Peggy—(Looks at Ethel). I took it.

Mrs. C.—Took it?

Peggy—Yes, aunt. I took it.

Mrs. C.—Her jewels! Ethel's jewels! Were you stealing them?

Peggy—No, I was not stealing them, I just took them.

Mrs. C.—Why did you take them?

Peggy—I wanted to wear them.

Mrs. C.—Wear them!

Peggy—Yes, wear them. I wanted to wear them to the dance.

Mrs. C.—What dance?

Peggy—Over in the Assembly Rooms. I was going over to the dance. I made a noise and Ethel heard me and came in to see what I was doing. We were going up to her room when I bumped into that post and some noisy thing fell down. That's all.

Alaric—(U.C.D.) There's someone prowling in the garden. He's on the path. He's coming in! Don't be frightened, mother. (Shivering and scared to death). I,—I'll,—I'll deal with them.

Ethel—(Aside to Peg). Mr. Brent.

(Jerry enters).

Alaric—Good Lord, Jerry! I say now! What is happening in this house to-night?

Jerry—(Crosses to Mrs. C.). I saw your lights go up and I came here on the run. I guessed something like this had happened. Don't be hard on your niece, Mrs. Chichester. The whole thing is entirely my fault. I asked her to go.

Mrs. C.—You were going to take my niece to a dance in spite of my absolute refusal to allow her to go?

Peggy—He had nothing to do with it. I was takin' him to a dance.

Mrs. C.—Surely, Sir Gerald Adair knows better than to take a girl of eighteen to a public ball without her relatives' sanction.

Jerry—I thought only of the pleasure it would give her,—please accept my sincerest apologies,—

Peggy—Sir Gerald Adair! Are you Sir Gerald Adair?

Jerry—Yes, Peg.

Peggy—So yez have a title, have ye?

Mrs. C.—Do you realize what you have done?

Peggy—(Looking at Jerry and much hurt). I am just beginning to.

Mrs. C.—I am ashamed of you. You have disgraced us all.

Peggy—Have I? Well, it doesn't matter. I am going back to some one who would never be ashamed of me no matter what I did. Why I have never been allowed to do anything I have wanted to! He lets me do everything I want because he loves me and trusts me and whatever I do is all right because I do it. I have disgraced ye, eh! Well none of ye can tell me the truth. I am going back to me father.

Mrs. C.—(Furious). Go back to your father and glad we are to be rid of you.

Peggy—I am going.

Ethel—(Rises). Wait, mother. She must not go. We have all been grossly unfair to her. It is I should go. To-night she saved me from,—from,—she saved us from,—(Sways and falls in faint and slips from Peg's arm to floor).

Peggy—She's fainted! (Kneels beside her). Stand back. Get some water,—some smelling salts. (To Alaric). Don't stand there looking at her. Do something. (Peg loosens her dress. Mrs. C. comes over to her). Get away from her. What good do you think you could do her. You don't know anything about your child,—You don't know how to raise them,—you don't know a thought in your child's mind. Why don't you sit down beside her sometimes and find out what she does and who she sees. Take her hand in your own and open her soul to you. Be a mother to her. A lot you know about motherhood. I want to tell ye my father knows more about motherhood than half the mothers in the world.

(Mrs. C. stands and looks at her amazed).

CURTAIN

ACT 3

Scene same. Alaric discovered lying on settee—D.L.—reading paper. Enter Mrs. Chicheater on R.V. He throws paper down, yawns and speaks as she comes down steps.

Alaric—Good morning, mother. How are you feeling?

Mrs. C.—I didn't close my eyes all night.

(Alaric leads her over to settee).

Alaric—Isn't that rotten. I was a bit plungy myself,—first one side: then the other. (Yawns). One hates to have one's rest broken.

Mrs. C.—What is to be done?

Alaric—We must get in 40 winks during the day.

Mrs. C.—No! No! Alaric. I mean about Margarette.

Alaric—O, the imp! Nothing, that I can see. She's got it into her stubborn head that she will have nothing of us and that is the end of it.

Mrs. C.—And the end of our income!

Alaric—Well, you were a bit rough on her mother, now I come to think of it. We have all been a bit rough on her except me. I have made her laugh once or twice, poor little soul,—hang it, I suppose she did want to dance. What's the use of fussing. Let her dance, I say. Better she should dance and stay than for us to starve if she goes.

Mrs. C.—Don't reproach me, dear. I did my duty. How could I consent to her going,—a girl of her age!

Alaric—Girl! Why, they are grown women with families in America.

Mrs. C.—Thank God they are not in England.

Alaric—They will be some day. They are kicking over the traces now. Don't worry, mother. I will beat the whole thing out myself.

Mrs. C.—Alaric, there is a way—one that would save us.

Alaric—Is there, mother? What is it?

Mrs. C.—It lies with you, dear.

Alaric—With me! Very well. I'll do it.

Mrs. C.—Will you, Alaric?

Alaric—Honor bright, I will.

Mrs. C.—Whatever it is?

Alaric—To save you and Ethel and the roof? Of course I will. Now you have me all strung up. Let me hear it.

Mrs. C.—Alaric,—my son,—do you like her?

Alaric—Like whom?

Mrs. C.—Margarette.

Alaric—Here and there. She amuses me like anything at times. She drew a map of Europe once that was the most fearful thing I ever saw. She said it was the way her father would like to see Europe. She had England, Scotland and Wales in Germany and the rest of the map was Ireland. It made me laugh like anything. (Laughs).

Mrs. C.—My boy, Alaric,—my son,—

Alaric—Hello! What is it.—You're not going to cry, are you?

Mrs. C.—O, if you only could!

Alaric—Could what, mother?

Mrs. C.—Take that little wayward girl into your life and mould her.

Alaric—Here. One moment, mother. Let me get the full force of your idea. You want me to mould Margarette?

Mrs. C.—Yes, dear.

Alaric—Ho, ha! No, mother, no. I can do most things but as a moulder,—oh, no. Let Ethel do it. That is if she will stay.

Mrs. C.—Alaric, my dear, I mean to take her really into your life—"To Have and to Hold."

Alaric—But I don't want to hold her, mother.

Mrs. C.—It would be the saving of her.

Alaric—That's all very well but what about me?

Mrs. C.—It would be the saving of us all.

Alaric—Now, how would my holding and moulding Margarette save us?

Mrs. C.—She would stay with us if she were engaged to you.

Alaric—Engaged! (Understands). Don't, please, mother! Good Lord! Engaged to that tomboy. O, don't, mother.

Mrs. C.—She has the blood of the Kingsnorth's.

Alaric—It is pretty well covered up with O'Connell Irish. Don't say any more, mother. You've upset me for the day. Really you have. The whole day.

Mrs. C.—But she has the breeding of my sister Angelia, dear.

Alaric—You wouldn't think it to watch her and listen to her. Now, once for all,—

Mrs. C.—She will have Five Thousand a year when she is 21.

Alaric—Five Thousand a year. Five thousand pounds of the very best.

Mrs. C.—Oh, my boy, my dear, dear boy. (Embraces him).

Alaric—Here. Half a moment, mother! Half a moment. One can't burn all one's boats like that without a cry for help.

Mrs. C.—Think what it would mean, dear. Your family preserved and a brand snatched from the burning.

Alaric—That is just it. It is all right saving the family. Any cove'll do that at a pinch but I don't see myself as a brand snatcher. Besides,—I am not altogether at liberty.

Mrs. C.—What!

Alaric—O, I have not committed myself to anything but I have been three times to hear a wonderful woman speak. Once on a platform and people are beginning to talk. She thinks no end of me. Sent me a lot of stuff last week,—advance literature she calls it. I've got them up stairs. Wrote every word of it herself. Never saw a woman who could talk and write like she can and besides all that I am afraid I have more or less encouraged her,—and there you are,—the whole thing in a nutshell.

Mrs. C.—It would unite our blood, Alaric.

Alaric—Oh! Hang our blood! I beg your pardon, mother. I can't really make our blood the first thing.

Mrs. C.—It would settle you for life.

Alaric—I certainly would be settled all right.

Mrs. C.—But think what it would mean!

Alaric—I am, mother. I am thinking,—awfully hard. Now just a moment. Don't let either of us talk. Let's just think. I know how much is at stake for the family and you realize how much is at stake for me, don't you.?

Mrs. C.—Indeed I do, and if I did not think you would be happy I would not allow it. indeed I wouldn't.

Alaric—She's not half bad looking,—at times,—when she's properly dressed.

Mrs. C.—I have seen her look almost beautiful.

Alaric—Shocking temper, mother.

Mrs. C.—That will soften under a restraining hand of affection.

Alaric—She would have to dress her hair and drop dogs. I will not have a dog all over the place and I do like tidiness in women. Especially their hair. In that I would have to be obeyed.

Mrs. C.—The woman who loves always obeys.

Alaric—Ah! There you have it. There we have it again. Does she love me?

Mrs. C.—How could she be near you for the last month and not love you?

Alaric—Of course. That's so. Now, let me see,—just get a solid grip on the whole thing —If she loves me and taking all things into consideration,—for your sake,—and darling Ethel's, —any way, mother, I'll do it. It will take a bit of doing, but I'll do it.

Mrs. C.—Bless you, my boy,—bless you! (Enter Peg from her room). Good morning, Margarette.

Peggy—(Coming down stairs). Good morning.

Mrs. C.—(Crosses to her). I am afraid I was a little harsh with you last night.

Peggy—You will never have occasion to be again.

Mrs. C.—That's exactly what I was saying to Alaric. I shall never be harsh with you again,—never.

Peggy—You will have to come to New York if ye ever want to be harsh to me again, that's where you'll have to come,—to New York.

Mrs. C.—You are surely not going to leave us just on account of a few words of correction.

Peggy—I am an' you have done all the correctin' you will ever do with me.

Mrs. C.—Have you thought of all you are giving up?

Peggy—I thought all through the night of what I am going back to, and I am going too as soon as Mr. Hawkes comes and now if you don't mind I would rather be left alone. I have a whole lot to think about and they are not very happy thoughts either. I would rather be by myself, if you please.

(Mrs. C. smiles and crosses up R.U.—exits).

Alaric—(Coming down stage). Hello, Margarette. (Peg takes book from under rug where she had hidden it in previous Act and holds it behind her). What have you there tucked away?

Peggy—The only thing I am taking away that I did not bring with me.

Alaric—You are not really going away, cousin?

Peggy—I am, and ye can forget the relationship the moment the cab drives me away from your door.

Alaric—Oh, I say, you know. Don't be cruel, Peg.

Peggy—Cruel, is it! Sure, and what is cruel in that, will you tell me?

Alaric—I thought we were getting to be such good little friends.

Peggy—Ye did? Well, look at that now! I didn't.

Alaric—I say, you know—I was—Really you mustn't let what my mother said last night upset you. Really you must not.

Peggy—Mustn't? now. Well, let me tell you, it did upset me and I am going to keep on being upset until I get into the cab that drives me from your door.

Alaric—Oh, come now. What nonsense. Of course the mater was a teeny bit dissatisfied, —that's all. Just a teeny bit. But now it is all over.

Peggy—Well, I was a whole lot dissatisfied and it's all over with me too. (She turns away).

Alaric—Don't go for a moment. Why not forget the whole thing and let's settle down into nice cozy jolly little pals, eh?

Peggy—Forget it, is it? I will not forget it. My memory is not so convenient. You are not going to be disgraced again through me.

Alaric—Just a moment.

Peggy—What is it now? (Stops just at foot of stairs).

Alaric—Do you know I have grown really awfully fond of you?

Peggy—No, I didn't know it. When did it happen?

Alaric—Just now. Right in this room. When the thought flashed through me that perhaps you really meant to leave us. It went all through me. 'Pon my honor it did. The idea positively hurt me. Really hurt me.

Peggy—Did it now. Really I am glad it did.

Alaric—Glad!

Peggy—I am. I didn't think anything could hurt ye unless it disturbed yer comfort and I don't see how my goin' will do that.

Alaric—Oh, but it did. Really.

Peggy—Sure now.

Alaric—You know meeting a girl around the house for a month as I have met you has an awful effect on a fellow.

Peggy—Awful!

Alaric—Yes indeed it has. It grows part of one's life as it were. Not to see you running up and down those stairs, sitting about all over the place studying all your jolly books and everything,—you know the thought pains me,—really pains me.

Peggy—Sure an' you'll get over it.

Alaric—That is just it. I am afraid I won't get over it. Do you know I am quite achey now, indeed I am.

Peggy—Achey!

Alaric—(His hand to his heart). Yes, really. All around here.

Peggy—Perhaps it is because I disturbed yer rest last night.

Alaric—You have disturbed all my rest. If you go I will never have any rest. I have really begun to care for you very much. O, very, very much. It all come to me in a flash down here.

Peggy—Sure that does you a great deal of credit. I have been thinking all the time I have known ye that ye only cared for yourself like all Englishmen.

Alaric—Oh, no. Oh, dear no. I care a great deal at times—Oh, a great, great deal,—we never say a word about it,—not a single word. You know we hate to wear our hearts on our sleeves.

Peggy—I don't blame ye. Ye would wear them too soon maybe.

Alaric—Cousin,—cousin,—do you know I am going to do something I never did before.

Peggy—Sure an' what is it, Alaric, what is it? You are not going to begin doing something useful, are you?

Alaric—I am going to ask a very charming woman to marry me, eh?

Peggy—Are you?

Alaric—I am.

Peggy—What do you think of that now?

Alaric—Don't you want to know,—can't you guess who it is?

Peggy—I couldn't guess in a hundred years, really I couldn't.

Alaric—Oh, try. Do try.

Peggy—I couldn't think who would marry you. Indeed I couldn't. Maybe the poor girl is blind. Is that it?

Alaric—Can't you guess?

Peggy—No. I'm tellin' you. Who is it?

Alaric.—You! (Peg laughs hysterically. He gradually joins in and both laugh heartily. He slowly quiets down.) That is a splendid one. Splendid. I have always been told that girls cry when they are proposed to.

Peggy—Sure, that's what I'm doing. I am crying,—laughing.

Alaric—(Getting serious). Of course you must know, cousin, that I have nothing to offer you except a li e-long devotion, a decent old name, and,—and my career when once I get it going. I only need an incentive to make no end of a splash in the world. You would be my incentive.

Peggy—Go on! Go on! Sure you're doing fine.

Alaric—Then it's all right?

Peggy—Faith. I think it is wonderful.

Alaric—Good! Excellent! But there are one or two things to be settled first. Just a few things. Such as a little obedience. That is most essential. A mode of care about ordinary things—for instance:—dress, speech, hair, etc., and NO MICHAEL.

Peggy—(Laughing). Oh, sure and couldn't I have Michael?

Alaric—No.

Peggy—Oh!

Alaric—At least not in the house.

Peggy—In the stables?

Alaric—We will get him a jolly kennel somewhere if you really want him and you could see him, say twice a day.

Peggy—Then it wouldn't be, "Love me, love my dog?"

Alaric—Well, really you know one cannot regulate one's *life* on proverbs, cousin, can one.

Peggy—But Michael is all I have in the world, except my father. Now what could you give me instead of him?

Alaric—What could I give you instead of Michael! Myself, dear cousin, myself. What do you say?

Peggy—Sure, I think I'd rather have Michael, if you don't mind.

Alaric—Oh, come, I say, you don't mean that.

Peggy—I do.

Alaric—But think for one moment of the advantages.

Peggy—For you or for me?

Alaric—For you, of course.

Peggy—I am trying to,—but I can only think of Michael. Sure I get more affection out of his bark of greeting than I ever got from a human bein' in England. But then he's Irish. No, thank you all the same, if it makes no difference to you, I would rather have Michael.

Alaric—You don't mean to say that you refuse me?

Peggy—If you don't mind?

Alaric—You actually decline my hand and my heart.

Peggy—That's what I do.

Alaric—Really!

Peggy—Really.

Alaric—This is final.?

Peggy—It is the most final thing there is in the world. (Laughs).

Alaric—(Very happy). I say you are a brick.

Peggy—Am I?

Alaric—It is awfully good of you. Most girls in your position would have jumped at me. Positively jumped.

Peggy—Would they? Poor things!

Alaric—But you,—why you are a genuine little hall-marked A-1 brick. I am extremely obliged to you. (Shakes her hand warmly). You are a plucky little girl. That's what you are,—plucky—little—girl. I'll never forget it,—never. If there's anything I can do,—at any time,—anywhere,—call on me. I'll be there. Right on the spot. (Enter Ethel—) Bless you my cousin. You have taken an awful load off my mind. I was really worried. I had to ask you. I romised to see you before you go. Hello, Ethel! All right? Good. (Exit into garden. Peg runs up stairs, meets her at her door).

Peggy—Come to my room. (Exit Peg, Ethel following).

(Hawkes ushered in by Jarvis, who exits promptly. Enter Mrs. Chichester).

Hawkes—Well, and how is our little protegee?

Mrs. C.—Sit down.

Hawkes—Everything going well, I hope.

Mrs. C.—Far from it.

Hawkes—Indeed!

Mrs. C.—I want you to understand one thing, Mr. Hawkes. I have done my best.

Mr. Hawkes—I am sure of that, Mrs. Chichester.

Mrs. C.—But she wants to leave us to-day. She has ordered a cab. She is packing now.

Hawkes—Dear! Dear! Where is she going?

Mrs. C.—Back to her father.

Hawkes—How perfectly ridiculous. Why?

Mrs. C.—I had occasion to speak to her severely last night,—she grew very angry and indignant,— and now she's ordered a cab.

Hawkes—Oh! (Laughs). A little childish temper. Leave her to me. I have a method with the young. Now tell me,—what is her character? How has she behaved?

Mrs. C.—At times, admirably,—at others—

Hawkes—Not good.

Mrs. C.—Not at all.

Hawkes—How are her studies?

Mrs. C.—Backward.

Hawkes—Well, we must not expect too much. Remember everything is foreign to her.

Mrs. C.—Then you are not disappointed, Mr. Hawkes?

Hawkes—Not in the least. We cannot expect to form a character in a month. Does she see many people?

Mrs. C.—Very few. We try to keep her entirely amongst ourselves.

Hawkes—I would not do that. Let her mix with people. The more the better. The value of contrast. Take her visiting with you. Let h . talk to others,—listen to them,—exchange opinions with them. Nothing is better for sharp-minded people than to meet others cleverer than themselves. The moment they recognize their own inferiority, they feel the desire for improvement.

Mrs. C.—Surely she has sufficient example here, sir.

Hawkes—No, Mrs. Chichester,—pardon me,—but no, she has not sufficient example here. Much as I appreciate the home atmosphere, it is only when the young get away from it that they really develop. It is the contact with the world and its high and marvellous interests that strengthen character and solidifies disposition. It is necessary,—

Mrs. C.—(Taps bell). If you can persuade her to remain with us, I will do anything you wish in regard to her character and its development.

Hawkes—Do not be uneasy. She will stay. May I see her?

Mrs. C.—(Taps bell again). There is one thing you must know, Mr. Hawkes, my son is in love with her.

Hawkes—What! Your son!

Mrs. C.—Yes.—Of course she is hardly a suitable match for Alaric—as yet. By the time she is of age,—

Hawkes—Of age!

Mrs. C.—By that time, much may be done. (Enter Jarvis). Tell Miss Margarette she is wanted. (He crosses: goes up steps, knocks at door, listens, walks in).

Hawkes—I am afraid, madam, that such a marriage would be out of the question.

Mrs. C.—What do you mean?

Hawkes—As an executor of the late Mr. Kingsnorth's will, it is my opinion it would be defeating the object of the old man's legacy.

Mrs. C.—He desired her to b trained. What training is better than marriage?

Hawkes—Almost any. Mar . . . should be the union of two formed characters. Marriage between the young is one of my p . . objections. It is a condition of life essentially for those who have reached maturity in nature and in character. I am preparing a paper for the Croydon Ethical Society and,— (During this Jarvis has descended stairs and exits) (Peggy enters). Well, what an improvement! (Takes her hand).

Peggy—I am glad you have come, Mr. Hawkes.

Hawkes—Why, you are a young lady.

Peggy—Am I? Ask my aunt about that.

Mrs. C.—Mr. Hawkes wishes to t . to you, dear.

Peggy—An' I want to talk to Mr H wkes too, but you must hurry. I only have a few momen .

Mrs. C.—I will see you before you leave, Mr. Hawkes. (Crosses up stairs to her room). (Exits R.U.).

Hawkes—Now, my dear Miss Margarette O'Connell—

Peggy—Will you let me have 20 pounds?

Hawkes—Certainly. Now? (Takes pocket-book from pocket).

Peggy—This minute.

Hawkes—With pleasure. (Counting out money).

Peggy—I want you to get a passage on the first ship to America. This afternoon if there is one.

Hawkes—Oh, Come! Come!

Peggy—The 20 pounds I want to buy something for my father,—just to remember England by. If you think my uncle would not like me to have it because I am leaving here, then my father will pay you back. It may take him a long time,—but he'll pay it.

Hawkes—Now listen. (Holding on to the money).

Peggy—Maybe it will only be a few dollars a week but father always pays his debts,—in time. That's all he ever needs,—time.

Hawkes—What is all this nonsense about going away.

Peggy—It is no nonsense. I am going to my father.

Hawkes—Just when everything is opening out for you?

Peggy—Everything has closed up on me. I am going back.

Hawkes—Why you have improved out of all knowledge.

Peggy—Don't think that. My clothes have changed. That is all. When I put my travellin' suit on again you won't notice any improvement.

Hawkes—But think what you are giving up.

Peggy—I will have my father. I am only sorry I gave him up for a month.

Hawkes—The up-bringing of a young lady!

Peggy—I don't want it. I want my father.

Hawkes—The advantages of gentle surroundings!

Peggy—New York is good enough for me with my father.

Hawkes—Education!

Peggy—I can get that in America with my father.

Hawkes—Position!

Peggy—I don't want it. I want my father.

Hawkes—Why this rebellion? This sudden craving for your father?

Peggy—It isn't sudden. I have wanted him all the time I have been here. I only promised to stay a month any way. Well, I have stayed the month. Now I have disgraced them all here and I'm going back home.

Hawkes—Disgraced them!

Peggy—Yes, disgraced them. Give me the 20 pounds, please.—(Holds hand forward).

Hawkes—How have you disgraced them.

Peggy—Ask my aunt. She knows. Give me the money, please.

Hawkes—Answer me one question truthfully, Miss O'Connell.

Peggy—What is it? Hurry. I have a lot to do before I go.

Hawkes—Is there an affair of the heart?

Peggy—Do you mean love?

Hawkes—Yes.

Peggy—Why do you ask me that?

Hawkes—Answer me.

Peggy—My heart is in New York with my father.

Hawkes—Has any one made love to you since you have been here?

Peggy—(Nods head and smiles). Sure. One man wanted to kiss me and I boxed his ears, and another,—almost man,—asked me to marry him.

Hawkes—Oh!

Peggy—My cousin Alaric.

Hawkes—What did you say?

Peggy—I told him I would rather have Michael.

Hawkes—Michael!

Peggy—My dog.

Hawkes—(Laughs). That is, you refused him.

Peggy—Of course I refused him. Me marry him. What for I'd like to know.

Hawkes—Is he too young?

Peggy—He's too selfish and too silly and too everything I don't like in a man.

Hawkes—And what do you like in a man?

Peggy—Precious little from what I have seen of them in England.

Hawkes—You would like a man of business in life to give you what you need. Of years to bring you dignity and strength to protect you.

Peggy—I've got him.

Hawkes—You've got him?

Peggy—I have. My father. Let me count that money. The cab will be here and I won't be ready.

Hawkes—I know one who will give you all this. A man who has reached years of discretion. One in whom the follies of youth have merged into the knowledge and reserve of early middle age. A man who can protect you and care for you, admire you,—and be proud to marry you.

Peggy—Are you going to let me have that money?

Hawkes—Do not speak of money at a moment like this.

Peggy—But you said you would let me have it.

Hawkes—Don't you wish to know who the man is whom I have just described, my dear Miss O'Connell?

Peggy—No, I don't. Why should I? With my father waiting in New York for me. I am waiting for the—

Hawkes—Miss O'Connell,—may I say Margarette,—I was your uncle's advisor. His warm personal friend. We spoke freely of you for many weeks before he died. It was his desire to do everything for you that would change your whole life and make it full, happy and contented. Were your uncle alive I know nothing that would give him greater pleasure than for his old friend to take your young life into his care. Miss O'Connell, I am the man.

Peggy—Stop it—What's the matter with you men this morning. You would think I was some great lady the way you are offering me your hands and your names and your influences and your dignities. Stop it an' give me the money an' let me go.

Hawkes—Don't give your answer too hastily. I know it must seem abrupt,—one might almost say, brutal. I am alone in the world,—you are alone. Neither of us has contracted a regard for any one else and in addition to that,—there would be no occasion to marry until you are twenty-one. There!

Peggy—Not until I am twenty-one! Look at that now!

Hawkes—Well, what do you say?

Peggy—What do I say to what?

Hawkes—Will you consent to an engagement?

Peggy—With you?

Hawkes—Yes, Miss O'Connell, with me. (Peg looks at him then bursts out in hearty laughter).

Hawkes—Am I to consider that as a refusal?

Peggy—You may. What would I be doin' a marrin' the likes of ye? Anwser me that.

Hawkes—That is final?

Peggy—Absolutely, completely and entirely final.

Hawkes—Very well. I think your determination to return to your father is a very wise one. I shall advise the chief executor to that effect and I shall also see that a cabin is reserved for you on the first out-going steamer and I will personally take you on board.

Peggy—Thank you very much and may I have the 20 pounds.

Hawkes—Certainly. Here it is.

Peggy—I am much obliged to you and I am sorry I hurt you by laughin' just now but I thought you were jokin', I did.

Hawkes—Please never refer to it again.

Peggy—I won't, indeed I won't,—I am sure it was very nice of you to want to marry me

Hawkes—I beg you—

Peggy—Are you going back to London to-day?

Hawkes—By the afternoon express.

Peggy—May I go with you?

Hawkes—Certainly.

Peggy—Thank you. I won't keep you long. I haven't much to take with me,—just what I brought here. (Runs up-stairs).

(Enter Jerry, ushered in by Jarvis who goes up-stairs to Mrs. C.'s room—R.U.) (Peg looks at him from top of stairs).

Jerry—Peg.

Peggy—I am going back to my father in half an hour.

Jerry—In a half hour!

Peggy—In thirty minutes then. (Exits into her room).

Hawkes—Why, how do you do, Sir Gerald.

Jerry—Hello, Hawkes. What does this mean? Going in a few minutes!

Hawkes—She's returning to America. Our term of guardianship is at an end.

Jerry—How is that?

Hawkes—She absolutely refuses to stay here any longer. My duties in regard to her, outside of the annual payment provided by her late uncle end to-day.

Jerry—I think not, Hawkes.

Hawkes—I beg your pardon'

Jerry—As the chief executor of the late Mr. Kingsnorth's will, I must be satisfied that its conditions are complied with in the spirit as well as to the letter.

Hawkes—Exactly,—and—

Jerry—Mr. Kingsnorth expressly stipulated that a year was to elapse before any definite conclusion was arrived at. So far only a month has passed.

Hawkes—But she insists on returning to her father.

Jerry—Have you told her the conditions of the will?

Hawkes—Certainly not. Mr. Kingsnorth distinctly stated that she was not to know them.

Jerry—Except under exceptional conditions. I consider the circumstances most exceptional.

Hawkes—I am afraid I cannot agree with you, Sir Gerald.

Jerry—That is a pity but it does not alter my intentions.

Hawkes—May I ask what your intention is.?

Jerry—To carry out the spirit of Mr. Kingsnorth's request

Hawkes—And what do you consider the spirit?

Jerry—I think we will best carry out Mr. Kingsnorth's last wishes by making known the conditions of his bequest to Miss O'Connell and then let her decide whether or not she wishes to abide by them.

Hawkes—As the late Mr. Kingsnorth's adviser I must strongly object to such a course.

Jerry—All the same, Mr. Hawkes, I feel compelled to do it and I must ask you to act under my instruction.

Hawkes—Really I should be compelled to resign my executorship.

Jerry—Nonsense! In the interest of all concerned, we must act together and endeavor to carry out the dead man's wishes.

Hawkes—Very well, Sir Gerald, if you think it necessary, why then by all means I shall concur in your views.

Jerry—Thank you.

Mrs. C.—(Enters R.U.—Speaks while coming down). I heard you were here.

Jerry—Mrs. Chichester, I was entirely to blame for last night's unfortunate business. Don't visit your displeasure on the poor child. Please don't.

Mrs. C.—I have tried to tell her that I will overlook it but she seems determined to go. Can you suggest anything that might make her stay. She seems to like you,—and after all,—as you so generously admit—it was to a certain extent, your fault.

(During conversation Jarvis has entered—X'ed to Mrs. C.'s room to advise her of Jerry's arrival. Crosses balcony, knocks at Peggy's door, and enters. At this cue he enters, carrying same bundles and dog—as in first act).

Mrs. C.—Where are you going with those things?

Jarvis—To put them in the cab, madam,—your neice's orders.

(Enter Alaric).

Mrs. C.—Put those articles in a travelling bag. Use one of my daughter's.

Jarvis—Your neice objects, madam. She says she will take nothing away that she did not bring with her. (Exit U.C.).

Alaric—Do not weep, mother. Please don't. It can't be helped. We have done our best. I know I have. (Leads her to setee at left). (To Jerry). I even offered to marry her if she would stay. Couldn't do more that that, could I?

Jerry—You offered to marry her.

Alaric—Poor little wretch. Still, I would have gone through with it.

Jerry—And what did she say?

Alaric—First of all, she laughed in my face,—the little beggar, (Hawkes clears throat), and after she had concluded her out-burst she coolly told me she would rather have Michael. She's certainly a remarkable little person and outside of the inconvenience of having her around would be delighted to go on taking care of her and if dancing is the rock we are going to split on, let's get one up every week for her, eh, Jerry? You'd go, wouldn't you?

(Ethel and Peg come down steps embracing each other at foot of stairs). (Peg wears same suit as in first act).

Ethel—Don't go, Peg.

Peggy—I must. There's nothing in the world that would keep me here now. Nothing.

Ethel—I will drive with you to the station. May I?

Peggy—All right, dear. (Crosses to Mrs. C.). Good-bye, aunt. I'm sorry I've been such a trouble to you.

Mrs. C.—Why those clothes? Why not wear one of the dresses I gave you?

Peggy—This is the way I left my father and this is the way I am going back to him. Good-bye, cousin Alaric. (Smiles at him).

Alaric—Good-bye, little devil. Good luck to you and take care of yourself.

Peggy—(As she turns she is face to face with Jerry). (Cooly). Good-bye.

Jerry—You are not going, Peg.

Peggy—Who is going to stop me?

Jerry—The chief executor of the late Mr. Kingsnorth's will.

Peggy—And who is that?

Jerry—Mr. Jerry, Peg.

Peggy—You the executor?

Jerry—I am. Now sit down in our midst and know why you have been here all the past month. (Forces her gently in a chair).

Peggy—My cab's at the door.

Jerry—I am sorry to insist but you must give me a few moments.

Peggy—Must!

Jerry—It is urgent.

Peggy—Then hurry up.

Jerry—Have you ever wondered at the real reason you were brought here to this house and the extraordinary interest taken in you by relatives who, until a month ago had never bothered about your existence?

Peggy—I have indeed but whenever I would ask anyone I have always been told it was my uncle's wish.

Jerry—It was indeed. His keenest desire just before his death was to atone in some way for his unkindness to your mother.

Peggy—Nothing could do that.

Jerry—It was why he sent for you.

Peggy—Sendin' for me won't bring my poor mother back to life, will it?

Jerry—At least we must respect his intentions. He desired that you be given the advantages your mother had when she was a girl.

Peggy—"You've made your bed,—lie on it." That was the message he sent my mother when she was starving. And why? Because she loved my father. Well, I love my father and if he thought his money could separate us he might just as well have left me alone. No one will ever separate us.

Jerry—In justice to yourself, you must know that he sets aside One Thousand Pounds a year to be paid to the lady who would undertake your training.

Peggy—A thousand pounds a year? Does she get a thousand pounds a year for abusin' me?

Jerry—For taking care of you.

Peggy—Well, what do you think of that. A thousand pounds a year for making me miserable an' the poor dead man thinkin' he was doin' me a favor.

Jerry—I tell you this because I don't want you to feel that you have been living on charity. You have not.

Peggy—We.ll, I've been made to feel it. Why wasn't I told this before. If I'd known it I'd never stayed with you a moment. Who are you, I'd like to know to teach me any better than my father. He's just as much a gentleman as any of ye. He never hurt a poor girl's feelings just because she was poor. Suppose he hasn't any money,—nor me,—what of it,—is it a crime? What has your money and your breeding done for you? It has dried all the very blood in your veins. That's what it has. You are frightened to show one real human kindly impulse. You don't know what happiness and freedom means. If that is what money does, I don't want it. Give me what I've been used to,—poverty,—then I can live sometimes from my heart and get some pleasure out of life without disgracin' people. (Crosses, lays head on Ethel's shoulder and cries). Why was I not told. I would never have stayed. Why was I not told?

Ethel—Don't cry, dear. Don't. The day you came here, we were beggars. You have literally fed and clothed us for the last month.

Peggy—You were beggars!

Ethel—Yes. We had nothing but the provision made for your training.

Alaric—I give it up. That's all I can say.

Peggy—And will you have nothing if I go away?—Tell me are you really dependin' on me? Speak to me,—because if you are I won't go. I'll stay with you. I would not see you beggars for the world. I have been brought up amongst them and I know what it is. (Aside to Ethel). So that's the reason you were goin' last night,—Holy Mother! And it was I drivin' you to it. You felt the insult of every time you met me as you said last night. Sure if I'd known, dear, I'd never have hurt you, indeed I wouldn't. (Aloud to all). Then it's all settled. I'll stay with you, aunt, and you can teach me anything you like. Will someone ask Jarvis to bring my bundle back and Michael. I am going to stay.

Jerry—That is just what I would have sworn you would do but my dear Peg there is no need for such a sacrifice.

Peggy—Sure, and why not? Let me sacrifice myself. I feel like it this minute.

Jerry—There is no occasion. (To Mrs. C.). I came here this morning with some very good news for you. I happen to be one of the directors of Gifford's Bank and I am happy to say that it will hortly re-open its doors and all the depositor's money will be available for them in a little while.

Mrs. C.—Oh, Alaric,—My darling Ethel!

Alaric—Re-open its doors! So it jolly well ought to. What right had it to close them. That's what I want to know,—what right?

Jerry—A panic in American securities in which we are heavily interested caused the suspension of business. The panic is over. The securities are rising every day. We will soon be on easy street again.

Alaric—See here, mother. Every ha'-penny of ours comes out of Gifford Bank and into sometning that has a bottom to it. In the future I will manage the business of this family.

(All except Jerry get interested in conversation and turn their backs on Peg. Jerry looks at Peg).

Peggy—Sure, they don't want me now. I better take my cab. Good day to ye. (Starts for door. Jerry stops her).

Jerry—There is just one more condition of Mr. Kinganorth's will that you must know. Should you go through your course of training satisfactorily, at the age of twenty-one,you will inherit the sum of five thousand pounds a year.

Peggy—When I am twenty-one I get Five Thousand Pounds a year!

Jerry—If you carry out certain conditions.

Peggy—What are they?

Jerry—Satisfy the executors that you are worthy of the legacy.

Peggy—Satisfy you?

Jerry—And Mr. Hawkes.

Peggy—(Looks at Hawkes who shows embarrassment). Mr. Hakwes! Oh, ho, indeed! Did he know about the five thousand pounds when I am twenty-one?

Jerry—He drew the will at Mr. Kinganorth's dictation.

Peggy—So that was why you wanted me to be engaged to you until I was twenty-one?

Hawkes—Come! (Clears throat). Come, Miss O'Connell. What nonsense!

Jerry—Did you propose to Miss Margarette?

Hawkes—Well,—er,—in a measure,—yes.

Peggy—That's what it was. (Laughs). It was very measured. No wonder the men were crazy to keep me here and marry me.

Alaric—Well, of course, I mean to say—

Peggy—I could have forgiven you, Alaric, but Mr. Hawkes,—I am ashamed of you.

Jerry—It was surely a little irregular, Hawkes.

Hawkes—I hardly agree with you, Sir Gerald. There can be nothing irregular in a simple statement of affection.

Peggy—Affection, is it!

Hawkes—Certainly. We are both alone. Miss O'Connell seemed to be unhappy. The late Mr. Kinganorth desired that she should be trained. It seemed to me to be an admirable solution of the whole difficulty.

Peggy—(To Jerry). He calls himself a solution.

Mrs. C.—Mr. Hawkes, I am ashamed of you.

Hawkes—Well, there is no harm done.

Peggy—No, it didn't go through.

Hawkes—(Smiling, and takes her hand). However,—always your friend and well-wisher.

Peggy—But never my husband.

Hawkes—Good-bye.

Peggy—Where are you going without me?

Hawkes—You surely are not returning to America now.

Peggy—Why, of course I am going to my father now. Where else would I go?

Hawkes—If you return to America and to your father, you will violate the most important clauses in the will.

Peggy—If I go back to my father?

Jerry—Or if he visits you until you are twenty-one.

Peggy—Is that so! Well then that settles it. No man is goin' to dictate to me about my father. No dead man, or live one naythor.

Hawkes—It will make you a rich young lady in three years, remember. You will be secure from any possibility of poverty.

Peggy—I don't care. I would not stay over here for three years with,—I would not stay away from my father for three years for all the money in the world.

Jerry—Very well. (To the others). Now, may I have a few moments alone with my ward?

Hawkes—I shall escort you down to the boat, Miss O'Connell. (Bows to all—Exits).

Peggy—Ward? Is that me?

Jerry—Yes, Peg. I am your legal guardian appointed by Mr. Kingsnorth.

Peggy—You are a director of a bank, the executor of an estate and now you are my guardian. What do you do with your spare time?

Jerry—(To others). Just a few seconds alone.

Mrs. C.—Good-bye, Margarette. It is unlikely we will meet again. I hope you will have a safe and pleasant journey.

Peggy—Thank you, Aunt Monica. (She starts to kiss her. Mrs. C. does not see her and X's to her room).

Alaric—Jolly decent of you to offer to stay here,—just to keep us goin',—awfully decent. You are certainly a little wonder. I will miss you awfully,—really I will.

Peggy—Did he know about the five thousand pounds when I am twenty-one too.?

Alaric—Of course I did. That was why I proposed. To save the roof.

Peggy—You would have sacrificed yourself by marryin' me?

Alaric—Like a shot.

Peggy—There is something of a hero about you, Alaric.

Alaric—Oh, I mustn't boast. It is all in the family.

Peggy—I'm glad you didn't have to do it.

Alaric—So am I. Jolly good of you to say No. All the luck in the world to you. Drop me a line, or a picture card from Newjork. Good-bye. (Crosses to his room and exits).

Peggy—(To Jerry). Please look out of the window for a moment. I want to speak to my cousin). He does so). (To Ethel). Is it all over?

Ethel—Yes.

Peggy—You will never see him again.

Ethel—Never. I will write him that. What must you think of me?

Peggy—I thought of you last night. You seem like someone who has been looking after happiness in the dark with your eyes shut. Open them wide, dear, and look at the beautiful things in the daylight and then you will be happy.

Ethel—I feel to-day that I will never know happiness again.

Peggy—Sure. I felt like that many a time since I've been here. You know three meals a day, a soft bed to sleep in and everything you want besides makes you mighty discontented. If you would go down among the poor once in a while and see how they live and try to help them, you might find comfort and peace in doing it.

Ethel—(Puts both hands on Peg's shoulders). Last night you saved me from myself and then you shielded me from the family.

Peggy—Faith an' I would do that for any poor girl, much more my own cousin.

Ethel—Don't think hardly of me, Margarette, please.

Peggy—I don't, dear. It wasn't your fault. It was your mother's.

Ethel—My mother's!

Peggy—That's what I said. It is always in the way you are brought up what we become afterwards. Your mother raised you in a hothouse instead of letting you come in contact with the cold winds of the world, when you were young and getting you used to them. She taught you to like soft silks and shiney satins and to look down on the poor and the shabby. That's no way to bring up anybody. Another thing, she taught you to be secret about things that are near your heart instead of encouragin' you to be outspoken and honest. Of course I don't think hardly of you! Why should I? I had the advantage of you all the time. It isn't every girl that has the bringin' up such as I got from my father. So let your mind be easy, dear. I think only good of you. God bless you! (Kisses Ethel).

Ethel—I will drive down with you. Call me when you are ready. (Exits into her room).

Peggy—(To Jerry). She's gone.

Jerry—Are you still determined to go?

Peggy—I am.

Jerry—And you will leave here without a regret?

Peggy—Sure, I didn say that.

Jerry—We have been good friends, haven't we?

Peggy—I thot we were but friendship must be honest. Why didn't you tell me you were a gentleman. Sure, how was I to know. Jerry might mean anything. Why didn't you tell me ye had a title?

Jerry—I did nothing to get it. Just inherited it. I would drop it altogether if I could.

Peggy—You would?

Jerry—I would and as for being a gentleman, one of the finest I ever met, drove a cab in Pickadilly. He was a gentleman. One who never willingly hurt others. Strange in a cab man, eh?

Peggy—Why did you let me treat you all the time as an equal?

Jerry—Because you are,—superior in many things,—generosity, for instance.

Peggy—Oh, don't try to come that on me. I know you now. Nothing seems the same.

Jerry—Nothing?

Peggy—Nothing.

Jerry—Are we never to play like children again?

Peggy—No. You would have to come out to New York to do it and then I mightn't.

Jerry—Will nothing make you stay?

Peggy—Nothing. I'm just aching for my home.

Jerry—Such as this could never be home to you?

Peggy—This! Never.

Jerry—I am sorry. Will you ever think of me,—will you write to me?

Peggy—What for?

Jerry—I would like to hear of you and from you. Will you?

Peggy—Just to laugh at my spellin'.

Jerry—Peg!

Peggy—Sir Gerald! (Drawing slightly away).

Jerry—Peggy, my dear. (Takes both her hands in his, bending over her).

Peggy—(Drawing away). Are you going to propose to me too?

(Jerry drops her hands and walks down D.L.)

(Enter Jarvis).

Jarvis—Mr. Hawkes says if you are going to catch the train,—

Peggy—I'll catch it. (Exit Jarvis). (Peg crosses to door and stops). Why in the world did I say that to him. It's my Irish tongue. (Looks at him and coughs. Rattles door knob. He pays no attention). Good-bye, Mr. Jerry,—an' God bless you and thank you for being so nice to me. Forgive me for what I just said to you. (Jerry brightens up). I want to ask you not to be angry with me.

Jerry—(Crossing to her). I couldn't be angry with you, Peg. Peg, I love you. I want you to be my wife. I want to care for you and make you happy. I love you.

Peggy—You love me!

Jerry—I do. Indeed I do. Will you be my wife?

Peggy—But you have a title?

Jerry—Share it with me?

Peggy—You would be ashamed of me, you would.

Jerry—No, Peg, I would be proud of you. I love you.

Peggy—I love you too, Mr. Jerry. (They embrace).

(Enter Hawkes. Coughs: exits on tip-toe).

CURTAIN.